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AN HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL VIEW
OF THE
SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY OF EUROPE
IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY
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CHAPTER V.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN IDEALISM.

IN tracing the progress of idealism from the revival of modern philosophy to the opening of the present century, we described four different movements which it exhibited respectively in four different parts of Europe. The French movement was seen to develop itself first in the school of Descartes, and to evaporate at length either into the revived Platonism of Malebranche, or the realistic pantheism of Spinoza. The English idealism, polemical in its origin, and living a life of contest rather than one of calm and lofty repose, we saw gradually retiring before the power of its adversary, and ere the eighteenth century was ended, well-nigh extinguished under the advancing sensationalism of the successors of Locke. The German idealism, on the contrary, seemed destined to realise nobler fortunes. Sent forth under the auspices of Leibnitz, the greatest scholar and perhaps thinker of his age, it enjoyed, during its infancy, a prosperous career in connexion with the logical order of the Wolfian school; then, taking another direction, it poured astonishment

over Europe, through the works of the immortal Kant ; and at the close of the century only seemed preparing for a still grander development, and a still bolder flight. Lastly, the philosophy of Scotland, although perhaps most vigorous and most original when in the hands of Reid, its real founder, yet appeared at the close of the last century to promise for the present a development of its resources, in some measure corresponding to the victory it had already achieved over the pretensions of scepticism.

The two anti-sensational forces, therefore, which meet our view on stepping over the threshold of the nineteenth century, are the respective philosophies of Scotland and Germany. Upon these it devolved to carry on the combat against the materialism of England and France ; and from these were derived the fruitful germs of thought, which have now succeeded in producing a reaction in favour of idealism in both those countries. In pursuing, then, the history of the idealistic tendency through our own age, we must first look to Scotland and Germany, as the sources of its chief movements ; having done this, we shall be the better able to estimate their effect upon our own country, and their share in the rise of the modern eclecticism of France. This sketch, as far as Scotland, Germany, and England are concerned, we shall assign to the present chapter ; the history of modern eclecticism, although strictly anti-sensational, yet, as presenting several peculiarities, we must reserve for a separate consideration.

SECT. I.—*The Scottish School of the Nineteenth Century.*

The rise and progress of the Scottish metaphysics during the *last* century have been already noticed in a former chapter. Up to the time of Reid, as we then saw, the representationalist theory of perception, though not in its strictly Aristotelian form, was the general belief of the philosophical world; and upon its foundation the edifice of scepticism, as erected by Berkeley and Hume, mainly rested. Against this system the philosophy of Reid was the natural reaction; and as the effect of all scepticism is to send us back again to first principles, so it was only a thing to be reasonably expected, that the bold and sweeping scepticism of Hume should give rise to a proportionally deep and thorough revision of the fundamental principles of human knowledge. The key to all that Dr Reid ever wrote upon these topics may be found in the one consideration, that he stood forth as the professed opponent of philosophical scepticism, and had from the first determined to devote his whole life, to tear up the very deepest roots from which it sprung. Hence arose his attack upon the doctrine of ideas, as being the *πρωτον ψευδος* of his adversaries; hence his opposition to the empirical tendency of Locke's refutation of innate ideas; hence his assertion of the immediacy of our knowledge of the external world; hence, in a word, his principle of common

sense, by means of which he sought to enlist the universal consent of man's intelligence against the subtle, and sweeping conclusions of a false philosophy. The very position in which Reid was placed, threw him back upon the only true method of all metaphysical investigation, that of reflection and inward analysis. Once taught rightly to interpret the observed facts of our consciousness, he found it no insuperable task to overturn the false hypotheses which had up to that time held an undisputed place in most metaphysical systems.

The polemical character, however, of Reid's philosophy, necessarily gave it a peculiarity unfavourable to its systematic development. Occupied as he was in pulling down, he had but little time to build up; and even that which he did succeed in erecting had rather the character of an outpost strongly placed to defend the citadel of truth, than of fresh turrets tending to beautify or enlarge it. Moreover, the opposition he was called upon to sustain against the almost universal voice of authority, both in ancient and modern philosophies, naturally led him to underrate a correct knowledge of their nature and history, and to deprive himself of many of the aids which a more extensive study of the best metaphysical writings would have afforded.¹ All this tended to give an air of incompleteness to

¹ Not that Reid was altogether insensible to the value of the History of Philosophy. Indeed, he reckons it as one among the proper means of knowing the operations of the human mind. "Intellectual Powers," chap. v.

his system ; so much so indeed, that he appeared before the world not exactly as a philosopher, but rather in the character of an earnest mind, contending only for a few great principles of truth, and willing, when those main positions were gained, to rest content with the first great victory, and leave to his successors the task of following it up into all its legitimate consequences. The more immediate successors of Reid, however, failed to do this. Furnished with their new philosophical organon, that of common sense, they did little more than celebrate a kind of perpetual ovation over the conquest which their great predecessor had by its means achieved ; or, if they ever attempted themselves to wield it against other enemies, they did so with far less nerve and proportionally small success.

Amongst the successors of Reid, however, there was one disciple, inspired with profound veneration for his master, and deeply imbued with his spirit, who rose to a distinction far above the rest, and succeeded in giving to his country's philosophy a popularity, which, in the want of some such advocate, it would, in all probability, never have obtained. The reader will at once perceive that I refer to Dugald Stewart, of whose writings we must now take a brief review.

This celebrated author, whose works form so large an item in the philosophical history of Scotland during the present century, was born in the year 1753. In 1773, he became professor of mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, and in 1785,

was raised to the chair of moral philosophy. His first work, entitled, "Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind," was published in 1792, and obtained considerable celebrity as a clear and eloquent exposition of the philosophy of Dr Reid. It was translated into French by M. Prévost of Geneva, and extensively read on the Continent as well as in our own country. In the next year he published his "Outlines of Moral Philosophy," which comprehended the chief results of the Scottish school on the moral phenomena of the human mind, and which have been more recently translated by M. Jouffroy, with an invaluable preface as introduction. In the year 1810, appeared his "Philosophical Essays," in which many of the points at issue between the philosophy of Locke, and that of Reid, are very clearly portrayed, and a lengthened disquisition added on the philosophy of taste. This work was introduced to the French public by M. Huron. In the year 1814, appeared the second volume of the "Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind," comprehending his analysis of the intellectual powers, and a very full exposition of the fundamental laws of human belief, an expression which he substituted for Reid's "Principles of Common Sense." The next two years were occupied in writing his "Preliminary Dissertation on the Progress of Metaphysical, Ethical, and Political Philosophy," the first part of which was published in the Supplement to the "Encyclopædia Britannica," in the year 1816, the second part in the year 1821.

So clear, so elegant, and, in many respects, so learned is the exhibition there given of the gradual development of metaphysical philosophy in Europe, and so acute the strictures on the different systems which it details, that many ground his chief claim to a lasting reputation upon these rather than upon any of his more systematical writings. The third volume of the "Elements" was published in the year 1827, and in 1828, the year of his death, came out his last work, entitled, "Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man."¹

Respecting Stewart's ability as a writer, there never has been, as far as we know, but one opinion, and that decidedly favourable. His reading upon all metaphysical subjects, (with the exception of the more modern German philosophy,) appeared to be almost as extensive as the literature itself; his judgment upon the merits of the different authors was, for the most part, clear and comprehensive; his own mind exhibited all the traces of the scholar and the man of taste, while his easy and attractive style seemed to throw a charm, and an interest around the most abstruse and forbidding subjects. There can be little doubt, but that the Scottish metaphysics, while they derived their bone and sinew from Dr Reid, yet owed to the labours of his successor all that mould and symmetry, that order and

¹ The second volume of the "Elements" was translated into French by M. Farcy; the preliminary discourse, by M. Buchon; and the "Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers," by MM. Simon and Huron.

beauty, which have given them a popularity greater than any philosophical treatises in the English language, which have appeared in modern times.

To give a criticism on Stewart's philosophy, as a whole, would be, in fact, nothing more than to repeat what we have already said of his predecessor and instructor, Dr Reid; the points in which he has departed from Reid's opinions being comparatively very few, and those few but of slight importance. It may be useful, however, to mention one or two particulars, in which Stewart may be said to have rendered essential service to the philosophy of Scotland, and to have excelled all those who preceded him in the same department.

1. He introduced many great improvements into the metaphysical *phraseology* of his school. The most prominent instance of this is seen in the fact of his discarding the term "principles of common sense," (the very term by which Reid and his immediate successors have chiefly characterised their system,) and conveying the same idea under the more dignified expression, "Fundamental Laws of Human Belief." The term, "principles of common sense," was in many respects objectionable: it appeared to place common sense in direct opposition to philosophy, and by implication, to assert that the two were altogether irreconcilable. Stewart perceived the disadvantage which arose from this circumstance, and proceeded with a laudable zeal to remove it.

To accomplish this end, he analysed more closely

than had been done before, the notions which Reid intended to convey under the expression itself, and showed that, properly speaking, they refer to the *primary elements of our reason*, rather than (as Reid implied) to the principles upon which *reasoning* is conducted. Common sense, we know, in the popular use of the term, is opposed to an incorrect and an untenable method of inference, to the habit of drawing false conclusions, or of admitting premises on slight evidence. On the other hand, the primary elements of man's reason are altogether of a different nature; their absence would imply absolute insanity; so that, instead of terming them principles of common sense, they should rather be designated *fundamental laws of human belief*, without which it were impossible for the mind to perform one of the intellectual operations, for which it is destined. "The former expression," Stewart remarks, "would only imply that we were apt to fall into absurdities and improprieties in the common concerns of life; but to denominate such laws of belief as we have been considering, '*constituent elements of human reason*,' while it seems quite unexceptionable in point of technical distinctness, cannot justly be censured as the slightest deviation from our habitual forms of speech." We give this as a specimen (perhaps the most striking one which could be brought forward) of the care which our author bestowed on his philosophical phraseology. He well knew that nothing tended so much to raise

metaphysical speculations above objections and misunderstanding, nothing to commend it so much to the common intellect of man, nothing so much to place it on a firm and lasting basis, as to clothe it in distinct, appropriate, and intelligible language.¹

2. Another service which Stewart rendered, was to revise the *classification*, which Reid had left behind him, of the phenomena of the human mind. The fundamental principle of classification is the same in each, that, namely, which divides all mental phenomena into *intellectual* and *active* powers. Under each of these two heads Reid drew out a long list of faculties or feelings, which he too hastily set down as original and peculiar facts of our mental constitution, apparently with little attempt to resolve them into any more primary elements. The instinctive principles especially were very imperfectly classified in Reid's philosophy, since they were made so numerous and complicated, that the effect was rather to perplex, than to throw any additional light upon the subject. Stewart, though far from giving a classification which can be considered unobjectionable, yet thoroughly revised that of his predecessor; applied to many parts of it a closer and better analysis; and if he did not accomplish all that could be wished on this head, yet pointed out the way to those who soon after

¹ On this point, see his observations, "on the vagueness and ambiguity of the common philosophical language, relative to the reason," &c.—Elements, Part. 2, preliminary remarks.

succeeded him. No doubt the excessive simplification of the sensationalist school was the ground of Reid's jealousy against resolving the phenomena of mind into a very small number of original elements : neither with the absurd conclusions of the French materialists before his eyes was Stewart very likely to venture with much boldness upon any speculations of the same nature. Notwithstanding this, however, he furnished many instances of elegant analysis, which not only introduced decided improvements into Reid's classification, but prepared the way for others to proceed still further on the same road.

3. But one of the greatest services which Stewart rendered to the philosophy of his country, is due to the manner in which he illustrated, confirmed, and adorned it by his *learning*. Reid seemed as if he gloried in standing directly opposed to the authority of more than two thousand years. Stewart, on the contrary, rather sought to prove, that the philosophy of other ages and other nations often tended to support his own. The former had to fight the battle for first principles so sternly, that he hardly thought of proceeding further when the victory was once achieved ; the latter came forward when the contest was already over, and had abundant leisure to confirm the main conclusions they had educed by an appeal to extraneous sources.

Than Stewart, few men, perhaps, were ever better enabled to carry on this kind of research. Devoted exclusively to philosophical studies, holding a position

which gave abundant leisure from professional duties, situated in a literary capital where books to any extent were at his command, he enjoyed every facility which was needed to aid him in mastering the history of philosophy and in applying it to the enlargement and perfection of his own system. Learning always inspires confidence; we naturally place reliance upon those, who build upon the well-known experience of past ages; and this was, doubtless, one of the methods by which Stewart gained the confidence of so many of his contemporaries upon most of the questions which involve metaphysical analysis. He appeared evidently writing upon topics which he had thoroughly mastered, respecting which he knew the well-nigh universal voice of history; and this alone was sufficient to give him a power to influence the opinions, and to gain the suffrages of mankind, which a more original and a less learned philosopher would probably have wanted.

Whilst, however, we can easily find so much to commend in the writings we have been thus briefly reviewing, there are points of no little consequence, to which we might make equally decisive objections. There are certain theories, for example, involved in his classification of the powers of the human mind, which, if strictly followed out, would have gone far to despoil his philosophy of its peculiar excellence. The classification itself is as follows:—1. Consciousness; 2. Perception; 3. Attention; 4. Conception; 5. Abstraction; 6. Association of Ideas; 7.

Memory ; 8. Imagination ; 9. Judgment or Reasoning.

Now, first of all, to make *consciousness* a separate faculty perfectly collateral with the others, involves a principle, which would soon have re-opened the floodgates of scepticism, and contravened the very conclusions which both Reid and himself with so much labour had established. Consciousness, as viewed by Stewart, is defined to be "*the faculty by which we are cognisant of our other mental operations.*"¹ If this limitation of the term be correct, then, of course, we can never appeal to consciousness for the truth of any objective reality. All for which we can make a direct appeal to consciousness is for the *process of knowing*, never for the thing known. Now, the great and fundamental principle of the school of Reid is, that we perceive external things *immediately*, that we need no image, or idea, or modification of mind as the medium ; but that the common belief of mankind (namely, that we really see, feel, &c., external things themselves) is literally correct.² Once admit that, after I have

¹ In the "Outlines of Moral Philosophy," (p. 18,) Stewart gives another and similar definition. "This word denotes the immediate knowledge which the mind has of its sensations, and thoughts, and in general of all its present operations."

² This is Reid's *professed* doctrine. It must be confessed, however, that he has compromised it by making the primary qualities of matter to be *suggested* on occasion of our experience of a sensation by certain unknown causes. If we have no *immediate* intuition of the primary attributes of matter, we are still within the sphere of our subjectivity, still virtually Idealists. *Vid.* Reid's "Inquiry," sec. vii. with Sir W. Hamilton's remarks upon it.

perceived an object, I need another power termed consciousness, by which I become cognisant of the perception, and by the medium of which the knowledge involved in perception is made valid to the thinking self, and the plea of "*common sense*" against scepticism is cut off. On this principle we are only conscious, after all, of a subjective state; the objective reality, which we suppose it to involve, may still be a delusion, and we are just as far from controverting the pretensions of the sceptic as ever.

Perception, as we have before shown, involves a relation between my subjective self and an objective reality: it is the percipient mind brought into direct contact with the qualities of matter through the medium of its own organism; take away either of the terms, and the perception is no more; so that, to be conscious of a perception evidently involves a direct consciousness of the object as well as the subject. If this be true, it follows at once that consciousness cannot be a fact of mind resting on the same footing and collateral with perception; that is to say, it cannot be co-ordinate generally with the other intellectual faculties. Were this the case we should have in each instance two faculties to perform the same office—a redundancy which would be sufficient to condemn any classification that could for a moment admit it. Consciousness, then, ought on Reid's principles to have been explained, not as a separate faculty, but as a more universal term, implying the general condition of reflective intelligence. I am conscious of self, and

I am conscious of not self; my knowledge of both in the act of perception is equally direct and immediate; on the other hand, to make consciousness a peculiar faculty, by which we are simply cognisant of our own mental operations, is virtually to deny the immediacy of our knowledge of the external world, and to restore the representationalist's hypothesis in a more subtle form. Hence we maintain that had Reid or Stewart carried out their doctrine of consciousness to its full results, they would have completely subverted their original conclusions, and lost the victory, which they seemed to have won.¹

The second of Stewart's original faculties is *perception*. On this point it is needless to make any further remarks. We have already shown in the case of Reid, that the philosophy of perception was well commenced, but not fully completed. Stewart did nothing to improve the analysis, but simply conveyed the results of Reid's thinking in more

¹ It would be a convenient distinction if the term *self-consciousness* were always employed whenever we wish to express the mind's cognisance of its own operations. This would help to remove the false notion that we can appeal to consciousness for nothing beyond them. I am aware that we must admit a difference in the *directness* of the evidence which we derive from self-consciousness for the existence of our own mental phenomena, and that of consciousness at large, as voucher for the truth of our primary beliefs. To deny the facts of self-consciousness, such as thoughts, notions, &c., would be a contradiction in terms; the very denial of them involves their existence, because to *doubt* is to *think*. To deny the deliverances of consciousness, however, on the validity of our primary beliefs, would not be an absolute contradiction, but would merely involve the assertion that our very constitution deceives us, and that the most intimate and peculiar utterances of our nature are false and delusive.

elegant and popular language.¹ Scotland owes it to the present professor of logic in its first university, that the philosophy of common sense has in this respect been made free from the objections which have hitherto attached to it, and the whole question fixed upon a basis, which neither the sceptic nor the idealist will be able very readily to subvert.

The third of the above-mentioned list of faculties is *attention*. "It seems to be a principle," remarks Stewart, "sufficiently ascertained by common experience, that there is a certain act or exertion of the mind necessary to fix in the memory the thoughts and perceptions of which we are conscious. This act is one of the simplest of all our intellectual operations; and yet it has been very little noticed by writers on pneumatology."² Here we see the evil effects of that false classification of our faculties into those of the understanding and those of the will. Had it been seen by Stewart, that *will, activity, power of causation*, expressed the most intimate nature of the soul itself, he would not have required to make a separate faculty for the particular exertion of the will, as applied to our sensations or mental conceptions.

The next three faculties, namely, conception, abstraction, and association, may be likewise reduced to more primitive elements, as indeed has been done by several of the more modern writers of the Scot-

¹ See Stewart's timid account of the whole question in his "Elements." Part i. chap. i. sec. 3.

² Outlines of Mor. Phil. p. 36.

tish school. The two former resolve themselves into other primitive *powers*; the last indicates an ultimate *law* of mind, that regulates the flow of all our ideas and feelings, rather than a separate intellectual power, by which we gain any distinct and peculiar species of knowledge.

All these errors of classification, however, in Stewart's philosophy, are in fact the result of a still more fundamental imperfection, by which it is encumbered. Reid, as we have before observed, evinced some *tendency* to reduce philosophy to an ordinary branch of inductive science; but was too deeply imbued with right views on the nature and necessity of *reflection*, to carry this tendency to any excess. Not so with Stewart. Throughout his whole writings, *the inductive method* seems to be his great idol. Nothing will do but facts, phenomena, observation—Baconian induction; all to be used, moreover, with a due share of discretion not to trespass a foot beyond the beaten road which has been thus pointed out to us. All this, no doubt, has a plausible aspect about it; but it should be remembered, that the method of *reflection*, by which alone our inward life can be scientifically known, is a very different process from that of outward observation, as applicable to the world of nature. When we gaze upon nature, all we can see is simply the succession of events; of the powers which are in operation, we can know nothing *directly*. On the other hand, when we observe the operations of our own minds, we have not only the perception of suc-

cessive phenomena, but a most intimate consciousness of the power itself by which those phenomena are regulated, and thus ascend from the actual to the necessary—from what *is*, to what must be. In this way we penetrate a step further into the nature of things, than mere observation could carry us; and by the personal consciousness of our own volitions as causes, we gain a faint conception (which, however, may be strengthened by reflection to almost any amount) of the wondrous operations exerted in upholding and carrying on the universe of existence around us. On this point, however, we shall not enlarge, as it will soon come more fully before our notice in giving a general estimate of the Scottish philosophy.

On the whole, we consider that the philosophy of Stewart, even to a greater extent than that of Reid, was too primary. He was so much employed in defending the outposts which had been won, in strengthening them against any fresh attacks, and in ornamenting them by his learning and taste, that comparatively little progress was made in building up a complete system. He was rather the acute and elegant critic, than the profound and systematic philosopher; and his labours, perhaps, are more highly to be estimated by the ardour and enthusiasm with which they were calculated to inspire others in the pursuit of intellectual science, than by the actual results which they themselves succeeded in educing. The sentiments expressed by Thomas Carlyle, nearly twenty years ago, in the “Edinburgh

Review," we regard as one of the most accurate judgments which have been passed upon Stewart as a philosopher. "The name of Dugald Stewart is a name venerable to all Europe, and to none more dear and venerable than to ourselves. Nevertheless his writings are not a philosophy, but a making ready for one. He does not enter on the field to till it, he only encompasses it with fences, invites cultivators, and drives away intruders; often (fallen on evil days) he is reduced to long arguments with the passers-by to prove that it is a field, that this so highly prized domain of his is, in truth, soil and substance, not clouds and shadow. We regard his discussions on the nature of philosophic language, and his unwearied efforts to set forth and guard against its fallacies, as worthy of all acknowledgment, as, indeed, forming the greatest, perhaps the only true improvement which philosophy has received among us in our age. It is only to a superficial observer, that the import of these discussions can seem trivial: rightly understood, they give a sufficient and final answer to Hartley's and Darwin's and all other possible forms of materialism, the grand idolatry, as we may rightly call it, by which, in all times, the true worship, that of the Invisible, has been polluted and withstood."

The tendency of the Scottish philosophy, up to the point where we have now arrived, was clearly and decidedly anti-sensational. The main efforts both of Reid and Stewart, were directed to the establishment of certain fundamental truths, (whe-

ther termed principles of common sense or primary laws of belief,) which could not be subjected on the ground of their empirical origin to the bold attacks of the sceptic. There can be no doubt but that both those writers, with so many evil examples of over-simplification before their eyes, were restrained from carrying out their analysis to the extent they would otherwise have done, and that they were thus led to assign a far greater number of original powers or instincts than were necessary to account for all the phenomena of the case. At the same time the error was on the safe side, especially in an age when everything in the form of philosophy, both in England and France, was rapidly assuming a materialistic and empirical character. The tone of Scottish philosophy, however, was now destined to undergo a very considerable change. Already in the writings of Stewart there were manifested, as we have before remarked, some attempts at a bolder analysis; and these attempts were not likely to be lost upon the ardent minds which succeeded him—minds in some instances deeply imbued with the empirical spirit of the age.

From the close of Stewart's career, indeed, downwards to the present time, we may consider that the *tendency* of the Scottish metaphysical school has been somewhat in the opposite direction from that which it manifested under its earlier supporters.¹ Not, indeed, that it has ever run into

¹ To this remark there are some eminent exceptions; none more so than Sir W. Hamilton.

those more extreme conclusions of sensationalism, which we have noted in the writings of Mill; but still, in its zeal for completing the analysis of the human consciousness, and correcting the errors or imperfections with which the works we have already noticed are characterised, it has incurred some danger, lest, once on the descent towards simplification, it should not know where to stop, in order to avoid the evils of the opposite extreme. We must now proceed to exemplify this, by sketching the history of philosophy in Scotland from the decline of Stewart to the present day.

Amongst the youthful minds which the Edinburgh professor inspired with a love for philosophical research, there was *one*, who at an unusually early age showed the marks of an extraordinary genius, and who afterwards rose to an eminence which did not disappoint the expectations he had excited. Dr Thomas Brown, to whom we allude, was born in the year 1778, and having received a liberal education in England, entered, while yet very young, upon the studies of the University of Edinburgh. At the age of sixteen he commenced the study of moral philosophy, under the tuition of Dugald Stewart; and was even then distinguished for the acuteness with which he entered into the most abstruse questions of metaphysics that were brought before the class. Before he attained his nineteenth year, he undertook to examine and refute the sophistry of Darwin, in his "*Zoonomia*," and with such clearness did he unravel the web,

and expose the fallacies it contained, that the work (published anonymously) was universally attributed by the "Reviews" to some philosopher of high standing and matured ability. His next work, published in 1804, was "On Cause and Effect," a subject which he was led to undertake from some illiberal remarks made upon Mr Leslie, on account of his favouring the theory of Hume. In 1810, he was elected professor of moral philosophy, in conjunction with Mr Stewart; and it is upon the lectures which in that capacity he delivered, although published posthumously, without having received their last touches from his own hand, that his fame as a metaphysician has chiefly rested. He died April 2, 1820, beloved by many, regretted by all, in the very ascendancy of his genius and reputation.

As a writer, Brown must be regarded as eminently successful. Inferior to Stewart in classic chasteness of diction, and philosophic elegance of style, yet his mind was of that poetic order which can throw a luxuriance, perhaps we might say a redundancy of imagery and illustration, around every subject that it undertakes. From this, mainly, has arisen the great popularity of his lectures, which have not only passed through many editions, but are now, after more than twenty years, in almost as great request as they were at first. Our chief object, however, at present, is to consider Brown as a *philosopher*, which we shall attempt to do without being drawn away, either by the depre-

ciation of his opponents, or the excessive commendation of his admirers.

That Brown possessed splendid abilities, and that his writings generally are marked with superior excellence, every candid reader must admit. The most distinctive feature of his mind is generally allowed to have been *the power of analysis*, in which he greatly transcended all philosophers of the Scottish school who preceded him. On this point we can go far to concur in the words of his admiring biographer, where he says, "No intricacy was too involved for him to unravel; no labyrinth too mazy for him to explore. The knot that thousands had left in despair, as too complicated for mortal hand to undo, and which others, more presumptuous, had cut in twain, in the rage of baffled ingenuity, he unloosed with unrivalled dexterity. The enigmas which a false philosophy had so long propounded, and which, because they were not solved, had made victims of many of the finest and highest gifted of our race, he at last succeeded in unriddling."

Endued by nature with so acute an analytic faculty, and not being restrained from its exercise by so strong motives as had operated in the case of the earlier metaphysicians of Scotland, it is not surprising, that he became convinced, even while his powers were yet immature, of the necessity there was for a complete revision of the current philosophy of his country, with regard to the classification of mental phenomena. Educated under the influence

of Reid's anti-sensational principles, on the one hand, and drawn, both by his own peculiar genius as well as the tendency of the age, to a more refined analysis on the other, he stood in a position admirably adapted to bring the classification of mental phenomena to a high degree of perfection. His reverence for the school to which by birth and education he belonged, secured him against the extravagancies of the French ideologists, and yet he was impelled onwards, by the other circumstances we have mentioned, to commence a kind of secret revolt against his preceptors, in behalf of a more comprehensively analytic system. While, therefore, with the example of his countrymen before him, he could not but be impressed with the absolute necessity of admitting certain fundamental principles of belief; yet he was so charmed, on the other hand, with the many successful attempts of the school of Hartley, to resolve complex phenomena into simpler elements by means of the laws of association, that his whole philosophy became tinged by its influence. To these circumstances we may trace almost all the peculiarities which are to be found in his writings, only considering that his views are worked up with singular clearness and sagacity into a complete system of psychology.

We are far, therefore, from attributing to Brown all the *originality* which has been claimed for him by some of his warmest admirers. Taking the influence of the Scottish school into consideration, he could hardly fail to retain his hold on some few

original principles of man's belief, lest he should again open a door for the re-introduction of the sweeping scepticism of Hume. Taking into account, on the other hand, his native power of analysis, aided and abetted by the current philosophy both of France and England, he was almost necessarily led to adopt some of the conclusions of the *sensational* school; yet still in such a form, that they should not contradict and overturn the main points, which had been gained by the polemical ardour of his own countrymen. He knew how to adopt Hartley's excellencies without his errors; at the same time he clearly saw how far it was possible to depart from Stewart without proclaiming against him too open hostility; and thus from a mind so nicely balanced between the two extremes, there emanated a classification which, avoiding the evils of both sides, came upon the whole nearer to perfection than any British philosopher had succeeded in bringing it before him. In thus extolling Brown's classification of the phenomena of the human mind, we would by no means represent it as unobjectionable, either in principle or in phraseology; all that we intend to convey is, that he was so far successful in his attempt as virtually to arrive at the three great divisions of our mental states, to which all the best analyses of more modern times have manifestly tended, namely, Sensation, Intellection, and Emotion.¹

¹ It is hardly necessary to state that Brown divides mental phenomena into external and internal states, the latter comprehending

But whilst we thus award to Brown the merit of great sagacity, and an admirable power of analysis, we must not lose sight of the defects by which his works are characterised, some of the most grave and serious description.

1. We would point out his peculiar *phraseology* as by no means calculated to add perspicuity or strength to his philosophy. There is something objectionable in the terms by which his very classification is expressed, namely, *external and internal states*. An external state, taken strictly, is an absurdity; for sensation is as much in the mind as is memory, and judgment, or any of the emotions.¹

intellectual states and emotions, the intellectual states again comprehending simple and relative suggestions, thus:—

Mental phenomena include	{	External states.	{	All the variety of sensations.		
		Internal states.	{	Intellectual.	{	Simple Suggestion.
				Relative Suggestion.		
		Emotional.	{	Passions and Desires.		

Sensation, intellection, and emotion, which the above classification evidently includes, may, without much difficulty, be shown to run parallel with the modern French divisions into sensitivity, intellection, and will. We shall have to show, however, that Brown's view of the will vitiated all the benefit which might have flowed from his division, had he assigned it its due place among the faculties.

¹ I am aware that the doctrine of Sir W. Hamilton might be regarded as opposed to his assertion, namely, "that the subject of sensation may be indifferently said to be our organism (as animated), or our soul (as united with an organism);" but this doctrine of

We are willing to admit, however, that Brown only intended to convey by the phrase "external and internal states," those which are marked in the one case by an outward, and in the other by an inward condition; still there arise two objections against such a classification—first, that in a proper classification, our mental phenomena ought to be designated by something that is characteristic of *themselves*, and not merely of the circumstances which may precede them; and, secondly, that the arrangement, even allowing its principle to be admissible, still fails of accuracy in the case of the emotions, many of which, though they are all denominated internal states, clearly involve certain external conditions; such as those, for example, which are termed instinctive.

Again, we have never been able to see the propriety or the desirableness of using the terms *simple and relative suggestion*, instead of the much more intelligible terms, which others have always employed to express virtually the same phenomena. The whole attempt, in fact, to account for the powers of memory and judgment by the laws of suggestion, we cannot but regard as utterly useless. Admit that memory and suggestion are fundamentally the same thing, what is gained in point of analysis by blotting out one original faculty and substituting for it another? It simply comes, after all,

natural realism cannot be pleaded on behalf of Brown's consistency, who distinctly considers sensation as a *mental state* only. An *external mental state*, we cannot but regard as a paradox.

to a question of phraseology. Here is a fact of mind that all admit; hitherto it has been called memory; now, says Brown, we must call it simple suggestion. What benefit, we ask, is conferred upon philosophy by the change? Perhaps it may be replied, that by pointing out the two kinds of suggestion, namely, simple and relative, you reduce the phenomena of memory and judgment to one law. Not at all. Judgment can never be reduced to the general law of suggestion; the very element which separates it from this general law has to be super-added, even by Brown himself, by prefixing the term *relative*; so that, although we cast away the old-standing terms, yet we are obliged to admit the same things under two other names. Simple suggestion is nothing else than an awkward name for memory, and relative suggestion nothing else than a still more awkward one for judgment; neither is the real nature of the one process or the other made at all clearer by changing the ordinary into the new and less intelligible phraseology.

Still, further, we should contend strongly against giving up the use of the words power, faculty, and other similar expressions, which keep constantly before our view the native activity or spontaneity of the human mind, and substituting in their place the phraseology, which represents all mental phenomena as *states* produced by fixed laws or by other and extraneous causes. That there is something at first sight plausible and apparently simple in this view of our mental phenomena, may be readily

granted ; but nothing can be really more false and deceptive. It makes our consciousness to resemble a *chain* consisting of *separate* links, the one springing by fixed laws out of the other. Instead of this, it rather resembles a continuous *thread*, without any division into parts, throughout the whole of which the intellect, the feelings, and the will, are indissolubly woven together. The notion of transition-states is purely imaginary. There is no such transition in the soul ; there are no points in our being in which we can say, “ Now I exist in one state of consciousness, and now I pass over into another.” Consciousness is a unity ; the elements of which it is composed run through the whole of its being ; every instant is a state, and every instant is also a change—equally one and the other. To consciousness, being and progressing are the same thing ; and instead of regarding the mind, therefore, as a succession of phases, we are much nearer the truth when we regard it as a living unity, endowed with certain *powers*, which it puts forth for the most part simultaneously, but with variations, with regard to their relative predominance and intensity.¹

Either style of expression, no doubt, *might* be defined, so as to convey a correct notion, whichever notion may be correct ; but to us it seems, on the grounds above stated, that the phrases intellectual and active *powers*, give, according to the common

¹ See some remarks on this subject by the author, in the *Eclectic Review*, Dec. 1846.

use of language, a far more truthful representation of the real character of the facts themselves, than does the philosophical vocabulary for which they have been exchanged. The tendency of this exchange is most evidently of a sensational character ; it diminishes the intensity of our notion of self, as an independent source of power, and contemplates the mind rather as a passive existence, moulded into its different states either by the force of circumstances on the one hand, or by its own inevitable and unalterable laws on the other. Unless far better reasons are given for so important a change of language, than any that are to be found in Brown's own writings, we must regard it as a serious defect, and calculated rather to retard than advance the progress of intellectual science.

2. Another defect in the works now before us, arises from the historical inaccuracies and misconceptions with which they abound. Brown possessed an ardent mind, rapid in its operations, vivid in its conceptions, and far more adapted to grasp the whole extent of a theory by one intellectual effort, supplying whatever was obscure by his own ready invention, than to develop it to himself by long and patient research. He was accustomed to read books with astonishing rapidity, and his retentive memory easily preserved the most important ideas for his future use. But it is evident, that this method of acquiring knowledge, however appropriate in the case of ordinary works, was by no means calculated to give deep and com-

prehensive views of those philosophical systems, which can only be mastered by close and prolonged reflection. Accordingly, we soon discover, that Brown's knowledge of the philosophy of the ancient world was rather popular than profound. He could describe in his own easy and lively style, some of the prominent features of the academy or the porch, of Epicurus or the Stagirite, but he had not studied these various systems in their deeper conceptions, their finer shades, or their historical development. The method in which the controversy regarding the ideal system is treated in his lectures, is a striking instance of the deficiency we are now describing. He accounts for the errors, which arose on this subject among the ancient philosophers, from their supposed indefinite use of the word *idea*, applying it, as he affirms they were accustomed to do, sometimes to the mental affection, sometimes to the organic affection, and sometimes to both. A theory more gratuitous and more inconsistent with facts, could hardly have been proposed. It is evident that our imaginative author, having got a general notion of the peripatetic doctrine of images, species, and phantasms; having taken for granted that it was held universally, and in the same manner by the schoolmen; having supposed, further, that the word *idea* was the one employed in both cases to explain their opinions, hastily jumped at the conclusion, that all the errors involved must have arisen from misconceptions connected with that one word. Now let

us learn, from the pen of one who has not inappropriately been termed "the greatest critic of our age," what was the real state of the case. "In the first place," says Sir William Hamilton, "the term *idea* was never employed in any system previous to the age of Descartes to denote little images derived from objects without. In the *second*, it was *never* used in any philosophy, prior to the same period, to signify the immediate object of perception. In the third, it was not applied by the peripatetics or schoolmen to express an object of human thought at all. In the fourth, ideas (taking this term for species) were not in all the dark ages of the scholastic followers of Aristotle regarded as little images derived from without, for a numerous party of the most illustrious schoolmen rejected species not only in the intellect, but in the sense. In the fifth, phantasm, in the old philosophy, was not the external cause of perception, but the internal object of imagination. In the sixth, the term shadowy film, which here and elsewhere he constantly uses, shows that Dr Brown confounds the matterless species of the peripatetics with the substantial effluxions of Democritus and Epicurus."¹ The instance we have here of historical inaccuracy and misconception, is by no means a solitary one in Dr Brown's writings; indeed, if we compare the knowledge he manifested generally of the philosophers

¹ Edinburgh Review, vol. lii., "On the Philosophy of Perception."

of antiquity with that possessed by Cudworth, Berkeley, or Henry More, with Cousin in France, or the modern idealists of Germany, we at once become sensible of his great deficiency. So far, then, respecting his knowledge of the ancient philosophers: it is equally evident, however, that there is a similar want of profundity in his estimate of the more abstruse of the modern metaphysical systems. His conception of the real nature and spirit of Cartesianism was extremely meagre. In that feature of the Cartesian doctrines, to which he particularly refers, namely, the theory of occasional causes, he has evidently misunderstood the whole bearing of the question; nay, he argues that Descartes himself was clear to lucidity upon this very doctrine, which was the basis of the greatest controversy among his immediate followers.¹

The same deficiency is manifest when he treats of the philosophy of Leibnitz.² To comprehend and dress up the popular idea attached to his theory of pre-established harmony was sufficiently easy, but we gain not the faintest glimmering from Brown's writings of the fundamental principles of the dynamical philosophy, as developed by that author; so that the theory in question, severed from the system of which it forms a necessary portion, appeared but the monstrous production of a half-crazy brain, instead of being the matured opinion of one of the greatest men in Europe, and the inven-

¹ Lecture 27.² Lecture 31.

tor of the differential calculus. Let any one place by the side of Brown's almost ludicrous exposition of this doctrine, that of his French contemporary, Maine de Biran, and then judge which mind had dived most deeply into the spirit of the Leibnitzian philosophy. It would not be difficult to show, that Brown entered with a like hasty partiality into the views of Locke, and that he greatly misunderstood the scepticism of Hume ; as the natural consequence of which he rejected the claims of Reid to the victory he won over the conclusions of that modern pyrrhonist. This, however, would lead us into a too lengthened discussion, and is the less necessary, as we have already lightly touched upon the perceptionalist controversy, and shall elucidate it still further in our succeeding remarks.

3. We proceed, therefore, next, to notice Brown's theory of cause and effect, which we regard as the foundation of much that is erroneous throughout his whole system. There are two classes of phenomena open to our observation,—mental and material ; otherwise termed internal and external. In both instances we observe change, succession, effects ; and consequently, in both cases, we acknowledge, in some sense or other, the existence of *causes*. In the case of mental phenomena, however, we have means of understanding the process of these changes (or, in other words, the nature of causes), which means, in the phenomena of matter, entirely fail us. In the latter case we observe simply the succession of events (and observation can show us

no more); in the former case, however, we possess a consciousness, which gives us, in addition to successive phenomena, the distinct idea of effort or power, excited by our will, as the intermediate step by which the two events are conjoined.

Now, in reasoning out a theory of causation, either we may begin with observing material changes, may ground our chief view of the case upon them, and from that view proceed to the explanation of spiritual ones; or, we may begin with internal phenomena, and carry over the notion we derive from thence, as to the existence of power, into the material world. Those whose philosophy is formed mainly upon the plan and the habit of physical investigations, starting from the external world, are naturally led to deny the existence of power altogether, inasmuch as they find no *sensible* trace of it in nature: on the contrary, those who start from purely internal and spiritual phenomena, have no difficulty in admitting the real existence of power, though invisible to the senses, wherever changes are seen to take place. First, the pure idealist, bending his whole attention upon his internal consciousness, transforms all nature into a system of mental dynamics. Secondly, the moderate idealist, admitting the reality of passive substance, yet maintains that there must be certain forces at work to produce the phenomena *in it*, which we constantly observe around us. Thirdly, the philosopher of the common sense school, like Reid and Stewart, though virtually denying the objective reality of power, yet admits, that we have a distinct meta-

physical conception of it subjectively in the operations of our own mind.¹ Fourthly, the incipient sensationalist, like Brown, is too much charmed with his method of physical inquiry to give any heed to this metaphysical notion, and hence denies its existence in any other sense than that of "immediate invariable antecedence," still admitting, however, the instinctive necessity of our belief in the perpetual uniformity of cause and effect in nature. And, lastly, the complete sceptic like Hume, as also the complete materialist like Priestley, and the French ideologists, not only deny the notion of efficiency or power, but refer our very belief in the constancy of cause and effect to the influence of experience and association. The position of Brown in the controversy, is thus sufficiently indicated as one in which the existence of power, delegated from the Deity, is altogether denied; the idea of any efficient causes operating in nature rejected; adaptation in causality entirely lost sight of; and the whole phenomena of mind and matter reduced to a series of events, the fact of whose connexion we see, the uniformity of which we believe in, but the bond of which is entirely unknown. Brown's first error on this subject is his overlooking our own personal consciousness of effort, the true type of a cause, the legitimate verification of the idea of power. Fraught with the instruction of this self-consciousness, we approach the wonders of nature with a new

¹ "The only distinct conception," says Reid, "which I can form of active power is, that it is an attribute in a being, by which he can do certain things if he wills. This, after all, is only a relative conception."—Active Powers, Essay i. chap. 5.

vision; we gaze upon the perpetual succession of movements and changes that are ever taking place around us, and what conviction do they at once suggest? Clearly this—that it is as much impossible for the mere skeleton of nature which we see by the eye, to start forth into activity without some unseen power or force to animate it, as it is for the arm we call our own to act without the energy of the will. Imbued, then, with a fundamental error on this subject, Brown approached the formal investigation of the human mind, and in accordance with the doctrine he had asserted on the question of causation, regarded it not as a spontaneous energy, but as a passive existence subjected absolutely to certain organic impressions from without, and certain fixed laws of consciousness within. It is curious to run through the whole of his lectures, and see how this idea follows him like a spectre, and modifies his opinions on every point. In his classification of mental phenomena, as we before showed, he sees only external and internal *states*; that is, he imagines the mind like an unhappy paralytic put into different positions, and obliged to remain stationless in each until the next force comes to act upon it. With regard to our knowledge of the external world, he cannot think that the soul is able to go forth by its own activity, and seize the reality and nature of objective existence around us; it must wait till a new set of sensations connected with the action of the muscles, teach us the important lesson, that there is veritably an objective world as well as a

subjective. How the mind reasons, however, from its muscular feelings, which, *as feelings*, must be purely subjective after all to the world without, and how it can infer any thing *beyond* itself from a sensation *within* itself, except by the aid of some primitive belief or intuition, he does not tell. Again, attention, which is pretty generally admitted to express the power of the will over our intellectual operations, stands in the philosophy of Brown for a modification of sensation : it is the state of mind in which “the increased vividness of one sensation produces a corresponding faintness of others co-existing with it.” On the same principle, we find the theory of recollection, which describes it as a species of voluntary memory, wholly rejected, and the process reduced purely to the laws of association. In fine, whether we regard the powers of memory, of judgment, of imagination, or any collateral phenomena, all these various forms of our mental activity are shown to arise from those fixed laws of suggestion, to the influence of which the mind of man is subjected, as absolutely as a machine to the *primum mobile* by which it acts. Such was the result, and, as we believe, the *necessary* result of the theory of causation, with which Brown entered upon his philosophical career. Once exclude the idea of power from our enumeration of the elements of successive phenomena, and all we have to do is simply to set down the generic changes which our minds undergo, and to define the circumstances under which they take place, leaving no place whatever for the spon-

taneous action of *the will*, which then becomes absolutely synonymous with *desire*. But without dwelling longer on this topic, which has been ably answered by Herschel, Ballantyne, Maine de Biran, Cousin, and others, we go on to consider,

4. Brown's support of the representationist theory of perception, as another imperfect feature in his philosophy. This theory has been maintained at different times and by different schools in a vast variety of forms. The most simple forms are those of the Epicureans and Peripatetics, the former of whom supposed that the mind comes to a knowledge of material things by means of refined substantial effluxions from them—the latter, that it does so by means of immaterial species or shadowy films, bearing an exact resemblance to the external object. A more subtle, though perhaps more reasonable form of the same theory has been held by many philosophers of later times, (of whom Descartes stands in the foreground,) who have supposed the inward representation to be not a separate existence, but a modification of the mind itself, produced, it may be, by the direct intervention of the Deity, as in the doctrine of occasional causes ; or by a pre established harmony, as maintained by Leibnitz ; or by other means which it is not worth while to enumerate. These are, in fact, the particular forms of representationism with which Dr Reid was acquainted, and against which he directed the chief strength of his argumentation.

There is, however, another view that many have

taken of the same hypothesis, which makes the representative object a *modification of the mind*, not produced by any extraneous source, but involved in the very act of perception itself. The process of vision, for example, would be explained, on this principle, in the following manner:—The rays of light come from the object to my eye, and impress an image on the retina : this impression is conveyed by the optic nerve to the brain, and the brain produces a change or modification of my mind. The real object of perception, therefore, it is argued, is the change that takes place in the mind ; so that, instead of perceiving the external world itself, we only view its forms and changes shadowed forth in our own mental modifications. This was apparently the opinion of Locke ; this, the foundation principle of Berkeley's reasoning ; and this, likewise, the theory distinctly asserted and maintained by Brown. Let any one carefully peruse his 25th Lecture, and he will find it stated, as clearly as words can state it, that the whole object of our perception is *the mind as affected in a certain manner, and existing in certain states*.¹

¹ The most complete view which has been given of the various hypotheses on perception in our own, or, as far I am aware, in any other language, is that of Sir W. Hamilton, in his "Dissertations to Reid's Collected Writings," Note C. He divides the philosophers who have treated of the subject, into A, Presentationists—or those who advocate an immediate consciousness of the objective ; and B, Representationists—or those who advocate a knowledge conveyed by some intermediate process. The former, again, are divided into 1. Natural Realists, and 2. Absolute Idealists, both of whom maintain a direct intuition of the real in their own peculiar sense. The latter, who are

The singularity of the case, however, is, that he was not himself aware of the difference between Reid's doctrine of immediate intuitive perception and his own doctrine of representationism; and hence the complicated series of errors and misconceptions, into which he fell in denying Reid's claim to the refutation of the ideal system. Had Brown fully understood his own philosophy, he must have seen, that it could lead to nothing less than a species of subjective idealism, if not to absolute unbelief; that cut off by it from any direct knowledge of the world without, and confined to the perception of our own mental states, we must totally fail of substantiating our faith in external realities against the arguments of the idealist or the sceptic. The practical effect of this doctrine, it is true, so far as our belief in the material world is concerned, could not be very serious, since our daily necessities would oblige us to act in contradiction to it; but its effect upon our confidence in the validity of human knowledge in general, must, if carried out, become lamentable. The instinctive conviction of mankind is, that they perceive the very object itself which is before them, and not a mere representation of it within themselves: once show that this conviction, resting as it

also termed Cosmothetic Idealists, are divided into two classes—1. Those who regard the representational image as a mode of the perceiving mind; and 2. Those who regard it as something apart from the mind, a phantasm or film. To the first of this latter class Dr Brown belonged, and ignorantly supposed Reid to belong to it also. For all the minor shades of these opinions, see Hamilton's "Reid," p. 816, *et seq.*

does upon our direct consciousness, is false, and on what grounds can we be justified in trusting the evidence of consciousness in other matters? All necessary and universal truth (which rests upon the evidence of consciousness) is from henceforth rendered uncertain; the foundations of our knowledge are undermined; and we cannot, in any case, give a reason for our belief, which same reason in other cases does not prove entirely fallacious. Brown denies, that the evidence of consciousness respecting the *real object of perception* is to be trusted; but, notwithstanding, he trusts that same evidence implicitly, when it asserts the objective existence of the material world, or the other primary laws of belief; which denial and trust being put together, evolve the conclusion, that our primary beliefs may be inconsistent with each other, that they are not uniformly valid, and that, therefore, nothing can ever be believed at all with an unflinching certainty.

The great argument upon which the representationist system rests is this—that things which are not homogeneous can have no mutual influence upon each other; that the relation of knowledge implies an identity of existence; in plainer words, that matter and mind cannot mutually affect each other *directly*, just because they are not both matter or both mind. This argument, we contend, is purely assertative; it entirely fails of support from reason or fact, nay, is contrary to the very mode of our constitution, as made up of a mind and material organism mutually affecting each other; and there-

fore, until some plea for it is produced, hardly requires any to be urged against it. The nature of causality in the one case is just as intelligible as in the other: we can as easily imagine the power of mind impressing its influence upon matter, as upon another mind like itself. On the other hand, the system of representationism in any form is beset with difficulties. The chief of these we have already given in the review of Locke, and to them, therefore, for brevity's sake, we must now refer the reader. If any one, however, wishes to see the whole subject discussed fully and satisfactorily, we recommend him to consult the "Edinburgh Review," No. 103, where the philosophy of perception is developed with greater depth, and learning, than perhaps in any other work in our own language.¹

After what we have said about the metaphysical philosophy of Brown, it is hardly worth while to make any distinct reference to his ethics. The deepest questions in ethical philosophy he has left untouched, since in no place has he boldly approached the subject of human liberty or necessity; but the conclusions to which he has come respecting the nature and ground of morals, we believe, are almost universally regarded as unsound, even by those who are the greatest admirers of his metaphysics. His principle here seems to be, that virtue

¹ We can now refer the student likewise, to the further illustrations of the philosophy of perception, which the author of the article here referred to has given us in his "Dissertations on Reid." See especially Note D.

cannot exist independently of virtuous agents ; that in itself it is a mere abstraction, expressing simply the relation between certain actions, and certain emotions which we feel in contemplating them. To this conclusion of course his theory of cause and effect was naturally adapted to lead. If events are known simply as successive, it is folly to seek for any *adaptation* in the one to bring about the other. Now in morals an action is one event, and a certain emotion is the succeeding one ; the former is the universal antecedent, the latter the universal consequent. According to Brown's philosophy, we have no ability to inquire further into the matter ; the cause of the emotion is no better known than efficient causes in nature are ; the word virtue, which men assign as an objective reality, is in fact a mere abstraction expressing the relation between the two events, just as gravitation is an abstraction expressing the unknown relation between two phenomena in the natural world. This conclusion, it is evident, at once interdicts the great question in morals, What is the *cause* of virtuous emotion ? or what is the ground of moral approbation ?—it tells us that there is no such cause, no such ground to be discovered ; that there is nothing in the nature of vicious conduct to produce remorse, nothing in the nature of virtuous conduct to produce approbation ; that the Deity simply has so fixed the succession of events, and that when we have well observed this succession we have arrived at the ultimatum of our possible knowledge. Of course, if this be true,

virtue and vice *might* be interchangeable; and if the mind become so hardened as to approve of sin, sin must at once become virtue! The ground of all rectitude being *our own personal feeling of approbation*, once let that approbation be reversed, and the relations of right and wrong are reversed also.

That Brown could give no better account of our moral nature than this, is by no means a matter of surprise, when we consider that there is no place in his system for the influence of the *will* properly so-called. To solve the problem of the human conscience, we must show that there is a basis laid for responsibility in our free agency, that our free agency is directed by intelligence, and our intelligence stimulated by moral sensibility. Brown has pointed out the forms of our moral sensibility with great clearness, has hinted at the use of the understanding, but of our free agency has failed to give any satisfactory account; and without this all moral accountability sinks into an empty name. Deluded by his psychological principles, he made no attempt to penetrate behind the veil of our feelings to the real world of moral truth itself; accordingly he has left behind him an ethical system which merely plays upon the surface of phenomena, but fails entirely to show that our moral sentiments are grounded in the eternal nature of things themselves.¹

¹ Brown's lectures on ethics have just appeared in a separate form, introduced by a preface by Dr Chalmers. In the remarks there made

We might have selected other points from the writings of Brown to comment upon, but those we have already discussed comprehend the most important instances in which his system appears to us to be defective or erroneous. While we admit the great merit which is due to him, on account of his classification, and cannot but admire the beauty of many of his analyses, still in many other, and those some of the most fundamental points, we consider his philosophy to have been a step *backwards*, rather than *onwards* towards the perfection of the science to which he was devoted.

Whilst Brown was thus engaged in remodelling the philosophy of his country, several other minds were employed in the same work, although, perhaps, with less genius, yet, certainly, with more caution. It was not to him alone that the importance of a closer analysis of our mental phenomena suggested itself: we find a similar tendency decidedly manifested in various other writers of the same period. Amongst these we might particularly point out Dr John Young, professor of moral philosophy in Belfast, who had virtually completed his system, and delivered it, indeed, to his class, *before* the publication of Brown's lectures, although it was not published till the year 1835. Dr Young, though by no means equal to Brown in natural

we fully concur; we only wish they had contained a stronger protest against a theory, which if developed cuts at the very root of all "eternal and immutable morality" in itself, and all moral responsibility in man.

acuteness or in brilliancy of style, yet added to a clear and comprehensive intelligence great steadiness, and patience in research. This is proved by the fact, that he arrived quite independently of Brown at a classification virtually the same, though unencumbered by any kind of novel phraseology. He reduced all *intellectual* phenomena to the three heads of sensation, memory, and judgment, steering a medium course with considerable skill between the more complicated systems of Reid and Stewart, and the over-simplification of Hartley. We have, in fact, in Dr Young another instance of the gradual reaction, which has been experienced in Scotland since the time of Stewart, in favour of a more sensational form of metaphysical philosophy; for, although he did not give up his hold upon the fundamental laws of man's belief, yet he everywhere exhibited a strong inclination to derive many of our primary notions from other, and those experimental sources.¹

It might be remarked, however, in justice to another metaphysician of great ability, who was long known as a lecturer, but who never appeared prominently in the literature of his country as an author, I mean Mr Mylne, the late professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow, that Young unquestionably borrowed much of his system from the class-room of that distinguished philosopher. From

¹ Young's lectures were published *after* his death, together with a short biography of the author, by William Cairns, A.M., professor of logic at Belfast.

what I have learned of those who attended his lectures, and what I have seen of the impulse they gave in prosecuting the work of intellectual analysis, I think there can be little doubt, but that his mind told forcibly upon the philosophy of Scotland during the many years of his professorship. The tendency of his influence, as of those before mentioned, was decidedly sensational: of this character were his analyses of many of our intellectual ideas; of this character, also, was his firm support of utilitarianism in morals; yet, we believe, he explained his views in such a manner, as not materially to injure those great principles of belief for which Reid had so earnestly contended. Somewhat of a similar tendency is the work of the Rev. John Ballantyne on the human mind, the whole of which is marked with considerable analytical acumen, and a corresponding tendency to reduce the laws of thought to a few simple elements. At the same time care is taken, here also, not to open the door to scepticism by invalidating our primary beliefs; and the conclusions, even of Brown himself, in some points, especially that of causation, are very forcibly repelled.

Whilst the writings of Ballantyne may be truly said to be less popular than they deserve, we must mention another philosopher of the Scottish school, who we consider, has, on the contrary, obtained a philosophical reputation considerably beyond his real merits—I mean the late Dr Abercrombie. That there is great intelligence, a tone of lofty morality, and much sincere piety pervading his

writings, we are glad to admit, but as works of philosophy, they can never occupy any other than a very inferior position. With the real history of metaphysics, with its more lofty speculations, with its sublimest theories, the author was manifestly entirely unacquainted. He looked upon every question simply from an experimental point of view ; and whatever lay without its precincts was set down as vague and uncertain hypothesis, whose mists were for ever dispersed by a purer light. Laying aside the use which the Doctor makes of his medical knowledge, and of the facts which have come under his notice, his works only remind us of Reid without his depth, of Stewart without his learning, of Brown without his genius. At the same time it must be remembered, that Dr Abercrombie never aspired to the title of being a great philosopher. Few men, we understand, stood higher than he did as a Christian and a philanthropist, and we are willing to believe, that his labours in philosophy were rather intended to *christianise* the moral thinking of his country, than to throw additional light upon the more abstruse questions of human research.

We shall now attempt to sum up our sketch of the Scottish philosophy by a few remarks, which may tend to illustrate its general nature, and point out the position it holds in connexion with the other systems, which history or personal observation present. And, first of all, its great excellency, we imagine, consists in its having confirmed, and to a

great extent perfected, the true method of metaphysical research. Bacon destroyed the influence which the syllogistic organum had exercised upon the minds of men for centuries past, and furnished the right key to the temple of knowledge. Descartes adapted the Baconian principles to the study of metaphysics, but was too much encumbered with a mass of *a priori* assumptions (though delivered in the form of arguments) to make steady progression in the science. Locke employed the Baconian method with far more success, having first learned to reject the most material errors of the Cartesian philosophy; but he, too, was still confused by the phraseology of former systems, and biassed by the representationist hypothesis concerning ideas. Reid was one of the first, who, taking the inductive method for his guide, formed, by the light it afforded, the conception of a purely reflective method of mental analysis, which should take its stand upon the most intimate facts of the human consciousness.

The long-standing doctrine of ideas, the empirical scepticism of Hume, the lingering remnants of the Cartesian assumptions, all fell one after the other before him; and upon their ruins he laid the foundations of a new system of mental philosophy, free from all illegitimate hypothesis and proceeding throughout upon strictly scientific principles. Just as the students of physical science before Bacon—not content with the simple employment of collating and interpreting facts—sought some hypothetical

explanation of them, quite independent of all actual experience; so, the mass of intellectual philosophers previous to Reid, were not able to divest their minds of the necessity of explaining the simple facts of sensation, intellection, &c., by some theory which could never be verified. Reid performed an inestimable service to philosophy, when he showed, that such simple processes must be viewed as ultimate and primitive facts in our constitution, which carry with them their own evidence, and admit of no explanation; nay, that the very attempt to interpret them only plunges us farther into darkness and uncertainty. The illustration and full application of the true psychological method, then, we regard as the main service of the Scottish philosophy—a service which has not been lost upon the age, and the ulterior benefit of which has yet to be developed in coming generations. On the other hand, the main defects of the Scottish school, particularly since the time of Reid, have attached themselves to these two points—First, the false or at least inadequate view it has taken of the reflective method in mental philosophy—and, secondly, the want of comprehensiveness, superinduced by that inadequacy, as to the legitimate objects and extent of philosophy at large. With regard to the former of these points, let it be kept in mind, that the great ambition of the Scottish philosophy, as seen in Stewart and his successors, has been to establish the purely inductive method of procedure as employed in the

Baconian school. The nature of this method is perfectly simple: it enjoins a full and adequate observation of *facts*, and then, from particular instances, rises through several stages of generalisation, to the *laws* which regulate their succession. Here, of course, there can be no *intimate* acquaintance with the real objects of research; their essential nature escapes *all* mere observation, for their latent powers and processes can never be made the matter of perceptive or inductive knowledge. On the other hand, when we scan the contents of our own consciousness by the power of *reflection*, we are engaged in a very different process from that of mere induction, and attain a very different *kind* of knowledge respecting the real object of our research. In the former case (that of induction), we can only know our object by mere *phenomenal observation*; in the latter we know it by a *direct consciousness*. In the one case, we can only form a *general notion* of it by a process of abstraction; in the other we have an immediate and concrete apperception thereof. In the one case we know nothing of its internal or essential constitution; in the other we are enabled by reflection to catch the very forms of our inmost activity.

To say that essences and causes are *equally* unknown whether in mind or matter (as the Scottish school has so often reiterated), implies a subtle misunderstanding of the very nature of *reflection* as a mode of psychological research. Our knowledge

of *mind* in the act of reflective consciousness, is perfectly adequate—it reaches the whole extent of its essence—it comprehends the intuition of its existence as a *power* or *activity*, and likewise the observation of all its determinations. To talk of knowing *mind* beyond the direct consciousness of its *spontaneous being*, and all the affections which it can undergo, is absurd ;—there is nothing more to *know* ; the only reason why we seem to know it so little is, that the process of knowing it *at all* reflectively and philosophically is so difficult, that there are very few who make much way in that species of introspection which it demands. This knowledge, however, when attained to, is a very different thing from the mere classification of phenomena, and leads to a very different result.

To develop this difference, let it be remembered, that in rational psychology, when we have observed and made our classification of the actual facts of consciousness as we find them, we have only *begun* our labour. The next thing after this, is to trace these facts up to their origin ; to discover not merely the *law* of operation, but the *reason* of that law ; to point out not only the reality of certain principles, but also their *absolute necessity*. To ask respecting a law of succession in the material world, why it must be so, is going altogether beyond the due limits of induction ; but to seek the absolute and necessary ground of our mental phenomena, is fairly within the province of reflection, because of the intimate knowledge which

consciousness gives us of mind, as at once subject and object.¹

So far, then, we proceed onwards in the subjective sphere, seeking all the while the laws and principles of *thought*, not the mysteries of being. But now a third problem opens before us, namely, to sound the *legitimacy* of our knowledge—to show how far the phenomena of consciousness give us the realities of existence ; to pass in this way from the subjective to the objective region of philosophical research. Now the link of connexion between these two regions is found in the IDEA OF A CAUSE. The first thing in the philosophy of causation, of course, is to observe the simple and palpable *fact*, that on the perception of successive events we have the notion of a cause. This, all admit as a fact, even Hume himself. The next thing is to trace this notion of a cause back to its origin. Hume, on his sensational principles, attributed it all to association ; a deeper philosophy, on the contrary, has referred it to a fundamental principle of our nature

¹ I cannot give a better instance of this research into the ultimate principle of mental phenomena, than the following remark of Sir W. Hamilton :—" An exposition of the axiom that positive thought lies in the limitation or conditioning of one or other of two extremes, neither of which, as unconditioned, can be realised to the mind as possible, and yet of which, as contradictories, one or other must, by the fundamental laws of thought, be recognised as necessary—the exposition of this great but unenounced axiom would show, that some of the most illustrious principles are only its subordinate modifications, as applied to certain primary notions, intuitions, data, forms or categories of intelligence,—as existence, quantity, quality, &c. Such modifications, for example, are the principles of cause and effect, substance and phenomenon," &c.

—namely, the *principle of causality*, which, as possessing the character of universality and necessity, may be looked upon as an absolute principle, such as could only exist in fundamental, not at all in merely inductive philosophy. Now it is, then, that having observed the actual fact of the case, and having traced it to the primitive principle, there arises the further question—how far does this subjective principle contain the evidence of an objective reality, and by what means may we pass from *thought* to *existence*? To find this passage, we must look to the point where thought and existence actually unite, and that point of union is the mind itself. Mind is both object and subject at once. Viewed as a succession of internal processes, it is simply an object exhibiting various forms of thought, feeling, &c., but nothing more : on the contrary, to the pure internal consciousness, it is a *subject*—a real activity, an essence, a being. Thus cause is a mere notion, and causality is a necessary principle, both of them subjective ; but our intuitive consciousness detects still further an activity, a real spontaneous *existence*, a noumenon, of which the principle of causality is a form or determination.

Having found, then, a veritable existence distinct from mere phenomenon in the depth of our own consciousness, and concealed under the principle of causality, we can proceed onwards in the objective sphere to a wider observation. In like manner as inward intuition gives us a direct apperception of the soul as a real existing activity, so outward intuition, or

perception, gives us a direct knowledge of the material world, as something distinct from *the me*. Here, as in the other case, we have the principle of causality as a link between subject and object—between thought and existence. For perception itself, which Reid assumed as an absolutely primitive fact of mind, is really but an application of the principle of causality. In perception, we perceive a relation between subject and object, the nature of which is the following:—All those phenomena which refer to the soul itself, are known by direct consciousness to spring from its own activity—the phenomena of perception, however, we feel to be the qualities of some objective existence operating upon *us*. The affirmation, immediate and instinctive, of a real objective cause exerting its power upon us, is the most ultimate fact in perception ;¹ so that it is the direct consciousness of self, as a force or cause, which leads us onward in the objective sphere of knowledge to the affirmation and intuition of a not-self—an external world as a counter force.²

Here, however, the process does not come to an end. The powers of nature are dependent, relative, and finite ; they all point us, therefore, to a self-existent unity of power, from which they sprang. The power of mind, as an intelligent cause, or personality, is relative and finite also ; and this points

¹ See Cousin's "Cours de Phil. Moderne—Ecole Ecossaise," p. 428.

² Hence the idea of substance is identical with that of *cause*, and the dynamical theory of the world is established.

us to an infinite and absolute personality. Combine the notions of a unity of all power as seen in nature, and a perfect type of all personality as seen in man, and we have the conception of a *God*. Of God as the infinite, the absolute, accordingly, we have a direct apperception. The light of primitive truth falls immediately upon the eye of the soul. Had we to reason ourselves into the existence of the material world, and were we to define perception as the act of the mind in conducting this reasoning to its result, we should never find our way out of the subjective circle. Perception, however, is a direct gazing upon the world without, by the medium of its immediate *action* upon ourselves, and here, in this *spontaneous* reception of truth, we find *the objectively real*. Exactly in the same manner, had we to reason up to the absolute, all we could do would be to personify our ideas; but pure reason, like pure perception, receives objective truth spontaneously: it gazes upon its object with an immediacy which suffers no error or doubt to intervene, and gives in this way a guarantee for its legitimacy, which it is impossible to resist. "When," observes Cousin, on the occasion of a finite contingent relative existence, which experience attests, "I conceive the infinite, the necessary, the absolute, the universal; when in presence of the phenomena which I observe in the world, I contemplate the great laws of that world, those laws which form the harmony of its movements, the order and beauty of its plan; when in retiring within the precincts of

my own nature, I attach the phenomena so variable and evanescent which I behold there to one simple, identical, and immoveable essence, I do not imagine, I do not dream, I do not compose, I simply *conceive*. My conception is a necessary and legitimate act of my mind, as much as the most simple perception."

On what authority, then, we ask, do these pure conceptions rest? what is it that separates them from the fictions of imagination? why do I *know* my imaginations to be mere fictions, whilst I attribute a real objective existence to the Infinite Being, to the laws of the universe, to the essence of the soul? Here are questions *grounded* indeed upon the facts of our consciousness, but requiring as answer, somewhat more than a mere classification of facts; requiring, in truth, nothing less than a critick of those purely rational, or metaphysical intuitions, in which the first principles of *ontology* are grounded. So far then with regard to the reflective *method*; let us now see how the scope of philosophy becomes enlarged, under its auspices.

In physical science it is a well known canon, that the higher be the generalisation we attain to, and the more primitive the law we evolve, just so much the more powerfully and fruitfully can we reason downwards by a deductive process, to the development of those "axiomata media" in which our knowledge mainly consists. Exactly so is it also in the philosophy of mind. If the philosophy of mind be merely that experimental classification of the more

obvious facts, which is all that many understand under the name of psychology, then the applications of it can be only very few and very fruitless: it can simply take its rank among the secondary sciences of observation; and even there can challenge comparatively little interest. But if, on the contrary, by inward reflection we can trace our ideas up to their primitive and necessary forms, if we can take a deeper insight into the working of mind, as the agent in all human endeavour; if, separating the matter of our knowledge from the form, we can gaze upon the actual types and processes of all thought; then it is evident we can reason downwards deductively with far greater power and far more fruitful results upon all the primary branches of human research.

A sound theory of morals, for example, can only be looked for when we start from this intimate view of mind as a spontaneous activity. For want of this a world of false reasoning has been employed to sink us down to the hypothesis of utter fatalism, or, what is virtually the same thing, of a philosophical necessity. The due comprehension of the religious nature, again, can never be hoped for except it be brought up to light from the very depth of our being. History can only be studied philosophically, by tracking the development of fundamental ideas along the pathway of human civilisation. Sociology will only advance in proportion as the most intimate constitution of human nature is unfolded, and its spiritual laws laid bare. In a word, whatever de-

pend upon the development of human thought, can only be placed in the daylight of *science*, by a philosophy which sinks beneath the mere classification of phenomena, down to the appreciation of the more intimate laws and principles of the human mind.

Still greater become the applications of a fundamental philosophy, when from the pure apperception of the infinite we descend with the torch of divine truth in our hands, and re-enter the regions of nature and humanity. Nature now becomes all radiant with *idea*. We see in its wondrous forms of beauty and marvellous processes, the thought of Deity embodying itself in the finite; while man, the highest expression of creative power, becomes a sphere of philosophical observation, in which we can study the highest truths of the Divine nature and perfections. In a word, only let us begin with a deep reflective consciousness of the human soul, with its innate powers and spiritual laws, and the *fruitfulness* of our philosophy, as it gradually develops, stands in the most marked contrast with the *fruitlessness* which has ever attended, and *confessedly* must attend, a mere experimental psychology. In truth, wherever such schools of psychology have conferred any benefit on philosophy at all, they have only done so by stepping out of the experimental sphere into the fundamental and reflective; just as Reid did, when he established his theory of immediate perception, and as the Scottish school now does, when it stands up for the validity of the

respective principles of *causality* and *teleology*, in the grounds of its natural theology.

Viewed, then, in this light, metaphysical philosophy, instead of being a science having its own separate objects, and co-ordinate with other sciences, is really a kind of "prima philosophia," which underlies all the rest. It is conversant, in a sense, with every object; it touches upon the whole matter of human knowledge; only it seeks to trace it up to first principles, to exhibit the abstract forms under which it must be viewed, and to show the primary laws from which it springs. In this sense there is a philosophy of nature, a philosophy of art, a philosophy of religion, a philosophy of history, as well as a philosophy of mind; every branch of human knowledge may, in fact, be traced back till it come within that small circle of the sphere which metaphysical science claims as its own peculiar province. Hence philosophy, in its highest application, is the reference of the contingent to the absolute, the grounding of facts in their necessary principles; it is the science which looks beneath the phenomenal world either of matter or mind, and inquires into the ultimate realities of both.¹

¹ I have been somewhat more explicit on the above points than before, to prevent such misunderstandings as the learned and excellent author of the review of my first edition, in the "North British," has unwarily fallen into. He says of my former remarks, (No. xii. p. 318,) "We have really been making it an express effort to ascertain the starting point of his ontology," or 'loftier region of thought,' over which he longs to expatiate, and to scale the heights of the 'Prima Philosophia,' and all that we can find, all that he himself alleges, is but these three

We must proceed, however, to make good our view of the Scottish school in this particular, by a little closer examination of its main positions. The primitive elements of all our knowledge, as we have often repeated, are finite mind, nature, and God. The Scottish philosophy contains all three of these ideas reflectively, but it regards them all from an experimental, rather than an abstract or a funda-

substrata to come and go upon. Now, though, by a fundamental law of the human understanding, we believe in a substratum for the Deity—a substratum for man—a substratum for the universe, we cannot for our lives imagine what more we know of them than that they barely exist; nor how it is that these three bare entities can be turned, like geometrical definitions, into the germs of reasoning and endless discovery. We fear that they will be of as little avail for progress as the abstract ideas of Plato. However, we say, let him again try, but would further bid our aspiring young philosopher ‘remember Kant’s dove.’ * * * It might restrain many an Ixionic flight.”

I beg to assure my friendly critic, that I *shall* try again and again, until something more fruitful than Scotch psychology comes of it; in the mean time, however, I must put my “prima philosophia” upon a fairer footing than that upon which he has left it to stand. Let us apply, first, the *argumentum ad hominem*. The critic believes in a substratum for the soul—the world—the Deity. On what ground? Upon a fundamental law of the human understanding. But how is the validity of this law established? Not by a mere inductive psychology, but, simply and solely, by this very “prima philosophia,” this very ontology, which is so decried. When Descartes established the spirituality of the soul by his reflective process—his “*Cogito ergo sum*”—he performed an office for which Reid could speak of him with deepest admiration. When Reid himself overturned the scepticism of Hume, and established his theory of perception, he too was working altogether in the region of a “prima philosophia,” and on that ground alone has occupied his high place in the philosophical world. Nay, when the critic himself, in his own eloquent style, argued out the being of a God on the principle of *final causes*, on what was all the strength of his argument based, but upon the objective validity of the human reason in these its fundamental laws? The Cartesian and the Scottish

mental point of view; and on that account cannot be regarded as sufficiently deep in its researches.

1. Let us view this as it regards the notion of finite mind. This forms, without doubt, the chief element in their metaphysics (and on this ground it is that we have classed them under the head of idealism); but what have we from that school which can answer to the idea of being a philosophy

principles on these topics are alike purely ontological. Take away their ontological force, and they are valueless.

But we are anxious that the *meaning* of ontology should be cleared up a little. The critic says above, "that he can find in it nothing but the three bare substrata before mentioned to come and go upon." Now, we beg to observe, that ontology has nothing to do with *bare undetermined existence*. This is, in fact, a mere fiction of the imagination. Abstract being is a nonentity, and the Hegelian equation *Seyn* equal to *Nichts* is perfectly true. Ontology has to do with being in its most fundamental determinations and necessary laws, so far as they can be ascertained. It strives to look beneath phenomena, as mere matters of observation and induction. But it never attempts to view bare undetermined existence, for the very sufficient reason, that no such existence has a being out of our own abstractions. Ontology, however, in its proper department, has assuredly reasoned out many a fundamental truth. It has looked deeply into the inmost constitution of the soul, and done far more than merely classify phenonema; it has well-nigh *established* a dynamical theory of the material world; it is pushing onwards its investigations into the nature of life, showing it to be the result of antagonist forces; it is trying to show how all things subsist in God, without driving us into the abyss of pantheism. To whatever extent such generalisations can be safely carried on, they do become as fruitful as geometrical definitions; they pour new light into every prominent region of human research, and give us a distant glimpse of the hope, that some day our knowledge may verily find its unity in this very *Prima Philosophia* itself. Doubtless many an Ixionic flight will take place here, as in every thing else, before the high argument is fully reached; but we prefer to fly even with the chance of an occasional fall, than to do like the Scottish psychology—never to soar at all. We are convinced that our wings are not all waxen.

of human nature, spiritually considered, in its fullest extent? The more obvious phenomena of mind, it is true, *as they appear in the individual*, are investigated and classified by it, with much patience and success; but this being done, little attempt is made to refer such phenomena to their primary and fundamental principles. In this respect it differs widely from the critical philosophy of Kant. Kant began his critick by investigating the conditions on which philosophy at all is possible; he undertook to survey the whole extent of our consciousness, to show the grounds of all human knowledge, and the limits to which it is confined. To accomplish this, it was not sufficient either to reduce our various mental states to a few general heads, or to enumerate a number of primitive facts attested by common sense to be infallibly true; it was necessary to go a step further, and to discover the very laws of our mental constitution upon which these primitive beliefs rest. In doing this he took care to separate the subjective element from the objective in all our conceptions; he showed how much of every notion comes from without, and how much from within; what portion of it is due to the external phenomenon, and what is due to the mind itself, by means of which it is comprehended; and thus he arrived (we will not now determine how correctly) at the subjective conditions under which everything is necessarily viewed, at the very forms or categories of the understanding. Whatever opinion we may have of Kant's peculiar theory in this respect, un-

questionably it was an aim worthy his all-comprehensive genius, to seek for the groundwork of our universal notions in the depths of our own being, and thus to refer all the principles of common sense, all the primary laws of belief, back to their source in the subjective forms of the understanding and the reason. No such survey of the human consciousness have we in Reid himself, much less so in his successors.

There is another point, to which we must next refer, in respect of which the Scottish school has ever been defective. While it has investigated the phenomena of the individual mind with much ability, it has neglected the phenomena of mind in the aggregate, as seen in the historical development of humanity at large. The philosophy of history is one of the most interesting branches of intellectual science. We look back to the earlier periods of the world, and we see men existing in a primitive state with none of the arts of life, none of the results of science, none of the refinements of society. We see them soon combining for mutual benefit or defence into larger communities, and beginning to cultivate some of the simple branches of literature and philosophy. The Asiatic monarchies, after having thus gradually risen and played their part in the destinies of the world, are overthrown by a more energetic race, among whom poetry, eloquence, and philosophy are brought to a hitherto unknown degree of perfection. These again are swallowed up by the gigantic power of the Roman empire,

which having itself been imbued with a new element by the power of Christianity, casts the seed of moral and spiritual vitality among the rude barbarian tribes by which it is itself overwhelmed, and thus prepares the way for the grand display of moral and intellectual power which the Christian civilisation has exhibited upon the theatre of the modern world. It is the part of intellectual philosophy to trace the great ideas which have aided, or rather forced onwards the advancement of mankind ; to show under what mental circumstances every nation has emerged from its darkness ; by what laws it has progressed ; and how each one has in its turn contributed to the development of the mighty elements, which ever lay potentially in the bosom of humanity. The history of civil institutions, of art, of science, of literature, nay, the history of philosophy itself, each has its philosophy ; all, in fact, being so many different phenomena, which the human mind *viewed in the aggregate* presents, and which must be carefully taken into account, if we would rightly estimate its capacity, and trace the influences under which it has been unfolded.

This again leads us to the great problem of human life, and of human destiny. What purpose is the mind of man intended to answer in the world ? and to what point is it tending ? If there be one fact of our consciousness more manifest than another, it is that the spirit finds not its full satisfaction upon earth. Why are we placed, then, in a state where suffering is certain, more or less, to embitter

our days, and where joy, when we obtain it, is but a transitory glimpse of a happiness which we may conceive of, but may never obtain? Generation after generation has passed away; their minds, like our own, have formed plans and purposes, which they were never destined to execute, and which, if they had been accomplished, would only have increased, instead of satiating, the thirst for happiness and immortality; their hearts, like our own, have beat high with hopes and expectations which never could be fulfilled. What is the interpretation of all these phenomena? Does philosophy tell us any thing or nothing of human destiny here and hereafter? These inquiries are not satisfied by a reference simply to the immateriality, or to the inferred immortality of the soul; we need to rise to a higher view of human life; to interpret it by an appeal to the whole stream of history; to probe the depths of our being by a solemn reflection upon all the facts it presents; and to draw the conclusions to which those facts seem necessarily to lead us.

To do this, of course, man's religious nature must be appealed to; and this appeal leads us into a region of internal facts, as veritable as any of the others which reflection unfolds to us—facts which we cannot leave out of our estimate of the human mind, without robbing it of one of its most remarkable and most distinctive features. All great and deep-searching systems of philosophy have struggled at the solution of these questions; they have all attempted to explain the ground of human duty,

human suffering, and human destiny ; and if the problem has never been fully solved, yet it cannot be denied that much light has been thrown upon it by the investigations to which it has been subjected. In one word, every great system of philosophy has included, as an essential part of its whole structure, the *philosophy of religion*. Admit, as we freely do, that revelation here comes to our aid, and sheds a flood of light upon the whole subject, still that does not repress or render useless the researches of our own understanding on the subject. For, in the first place, revelation puts everything before us in its popular and practical aspect, and leaves very much on all speculative questions to be elucidated by our own thinking ; and then, even supposing we accept a truth on the ground of its being revealed, yet still it is an object of no little interest to show, that the same truth is not only consistent with, but may be actually deduced from, the axioms of a sound philosophy. We feel convinced, therefore, that the Scottish philosophy will never take a firm and lasting hold upon mankind, until it points us to the solution of some at least of the great questions, which ever and anon rise up before our view, with which we are from time to time tormented and perplexed, but which, when once conceived, we can never again bid depart from our thoughts.

2. But we must refer next to the second of the primitive notions, which lie at the foundations of human knowledge, that of *nature*, and consider in what manner our northern metaphysicians have

dealt with this idea. To determine the objective reality, which we attach to this notion, was one of the chief objects of Reid's philosophy ; but this aim having been accomplished, the subject has rested, with little exception, in the same position ever since. The investigation of the external *laws* of the material world, of course, comes under the department of physical science. On the other hand, the great metaphysical question, which it behoves philosophy to grapple with, is this,—What is it, in the state of mind called *perception*, that comes from the objective reality ; and what is it that comes from the laws of our own intellectual nature ? It is pretty generally admitted, that this state of consciousness arises from the union of the subjective with the objective, that it is a felt relation between nature and self. What, then, in every case is due to the subjective, and what to the objective element, and what conclusion does this lead us to draw with regard to the nature of matter in general ?

Now every ontological question of this nature is virtually proscribed by the Scottish school. Instead of doing this, our aim should be, beginning with the experimental or psychological method, to find a legitimate passage from psychology to ontology, and to determine, as far as we are able, the mode and the nature of material existence. After all the disputes about infinite divisibility on the one hand, and ultimate atoms on the other, it may perhaps at length be found, that a system of monadology is the most intelligible theory ; that the most

correct notion of matter is that of a combination of forces, which produce certain impressions upon our minds, and to which those minds necessarily attribute certain material properties. Thus it may turn out that the mode, in which we are now accustomed to view material masses in physical science, namely, as powers acting in certain directions, is *metaphysically*, as well as mechanically true.

Again : when we view the variety of the material universe—when we perceive the order, harmony, and beauty which everywhere subsist, when we rise to contemplate its immensity, until the mind is lost in the unending series of system upon system, which reveal themselves in the boundless fields of space—the great problem unfolds itself before us—What purpose is all this gigantic machinery now accomplishing, and what is its final destiny? We admit that this problem has never yet received its complete answer from the efforts of philosophy ; but yet we say, that the purpose and destiny of nature, viewed in her mysterious existence, in her endless forms of beauty, in her profusion of glory, in her solemn movements, and in her inconceivable immensity, present a subject of philosophic speculation too real, too awful, and too sublime to be hurried off the stage of inquiry, as lying beyond the reach of our present faculties to fathom. The attempt to fathom this question has often indeed merged into a pantheistic result. But the fact of false theories being maintained, does not render the search for truth any the less important or legitimate. Quite cer-

tain it is, that the more nature is investigated with a right mind and a devotional heart, the more closely it brings us into contact with the Divine ; nay, that it is the want of recognising the spiritual and ideal in nature, which has so often betrayed the naturalist into a cold and heartless atheism. Generally, then, we cannot but feel that the philosophy of Scotland has been deficient in explaining the proper existence of matter, and casting a light upon the great idea of nature herself.

3. The last idea which the Scottish philosophy, in common with every true philosophy, contains, is that of the infinite, absolute, unconditioned existence, *i. e.*, of God. This idea gives rise to natural theology, which is treated of with considerable success by some of the northern metaphysicians, so far at least as their researches reach. The points here, which need taking up more fully, are, first, the origin of the idea of an absolute being in the human mind ; and, secondly, the relation of the Divine power and energy to man on the one hand, and to nature on the other. With regard to the former of these points, the argument from design has been drawn out most fully and beautifully by the Scottish writers, from Reid down to Chalmers ; but all have gone upon the supposition that the *conception of the absolute* is already in the mind, and have simply attempted to prove its objective reality. Nature can show an infinity of *power* in perpetual operation, and its harmony may point us to a *unity* from which it emanates ; but nature can never give

us the idea of an *infinite personality*. Here we have to fall back simply *upon the soul*—the absolute starting-point of all theology.¹ The second point would be a comment upon the scriptural doctrine—"In God we live, and move, and have our being." This is a truth, which has more meaning in it than the cursory reading of it gives us; it evidently has a reference to the mysterious dependence of the human spirit upon the Divine, showing us that we are all emanations from the infinite essence, and though gifted with a distinct personality, yet that we are but waves in the great ocean of existence, ever rolling onwards to our eternal home in the bosom of God. In the same manner as God holds an intimate relationship with all mental, so also does he with all material dependent existence—a relationship which it is the endeavour of every comprehensive system of philosophy to explain. It is true, the Scottish philosophy has somewhat touched upon this point in discussing the question of efficient and secondary causes, but yet so imperfectly, that it is impossible to derive either light or satisfaction from its conclusions. There is perhaps no point which more requires to be elucidated, and none which comes more within the compass of metaphysics, as acknowledged in Scotland, than the theory of what we should term the secondary and delegated powers of nature. We are aware that revelation may cast light upon this, and

¹ See Appendix, Note A.

many other of the questions we have mentioned, and that in some instances it affords a very distinct answer to them ; but the object of philosophy, as applied to these subjects, is to place them upon another footing, to deduce them in a connected chain of reasoning from generally admitted facts and principles, to make them the objects, not of faith but of science, and thus to show the unity, as far as the parallel can be traced, between the conclusions of reason and the dictates of revelation. Thus, in fine, the Scottish school of metaphysics, though containing all the fundamental ideas of human knowledge, and consequently the germs of a most complete system, yet appears wanting in *comprehensiveness* as it regards each separate department. It answers, in a word, to the description given of it by the celebrated reviewer before referred to ; that, namely, of a preparation for philosophy, rather than a philosophy itself.

Before we close our remarks, however, upon Scotland, we must not forget to mention one publication to which Europe itself is indebted as a literary organ, and which, though partaking predominantly of the mind of the country in which it originated, yet has ever looked upon philosophical questions with an enlarged and liberal spirit. The "Edinburgh Review," to which it will be at once seen that we refer, has been the channel, through which some of the master minds of Scotland as well as England have from time to time given their thoughts to the world. Among the philosophical

writers who have enriched its pages, we shall mention two, one living, and one some years since gone to his rest, who have contributed not a little to keep alive in our country the declining spirit of metaphysical research.

Sir James Mackintosh, the latter of those to whom we refer, possessed all the qualifications for a philosopher of the highest order. Educated originally as one of the Scottish school, he soon learned, on leaving his native country, to overstep the limits to which he was there confined; and amidst the labours of an arduous professional life, devoted what time he could spare from his duties to a most widely-extended course of philosophical reading and study. It is chiefly as a moralist that Sir James Mackintosh stood pre-eminent; and the ardour, the depth, and the learning with which he combated the selfish systems, and pleaded for the authority and sanctity of the moral faculty in man, contributed perhaps more than any single cause not of a religious nature, to oppose the bold advances of utilitarianism, and infuse a healthier tone into the moral principles of the country. Without signifying our adherence to his peculiar theory respecting conscience, we still regard his thoughts and speculations as taking eminently the right direction; and had he obtained leisure to mature his views, and give them to the world in his own forcible and glowing style, it is the opinion of some best able to judge upon the subject, (*e. g.* Robert Hall and Dr Chalmers,) that he would have placed

the whole theory of morals upon a higher and more commanding position, than it had ever occupied before in this country. With the exception of his admirable dissertation on ethical philosophy in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," his chief metaphysical writings are to be found in the pages of the "Edinburgh Review," where the practised eye can easily detect his articles by the combination of profuse learning, and profound thought, with a brilliancy of style, and a gentleness of criticism, alike significant of his intellectual power and his kindly affections. As a metaphysician, Mackintosh tended decidedly to the more spiritual school of philosophy, and had he read as deeply into the German authors as he himself projected, would undoubtedly have given a great spur to the renewed study of the higher metaphysics. As it is, however, he can never fill that space in the philosophical history of our country, for which his genius eminently fitted him.

Respecting the other writer, to whom we have alluded, namely, Sir William Hamilton, we shall say less than we should feel inclined to say were he not a living author, from whom the public has still some further expectations, and were it not improper to remark upon theories which as yet have not been published beyond the privacy of the lecture-room. Enough, however, has already appeared from his pen, to warrant the assertion, that no history of Modern Philosophy can be complete without giving due place to the researches there instituted. We might refer to the elaborate articles, which

have appeared in the Edinburgh Review, on "The Philosophy of Perception," on "Cousin's Eclecticism," and on "Modern Logic," each of which contains germs of philosophical principles which admit of indefinite expansion; but we are happy to be able to refer to a more complete, though still unfinished exposition of his philosophy, in the Dissertations appended to his recent edition of Reid's collected writings.¹ Should any one suppose that the editor has taken his stand upon those writings, as containing in all respects a true philosophy, he will be much mistaken, for in no work of the age are many of Reid's principles more completely overthrown. The works of the great founder of the school of "common sense," are simply regarded as coming, *upon the whole*, nearer to the truth than any other; as forming, in fact, a kind of centre between contending systems on which a high and refined eclecticism can plant itself, in order to grasp those catholic principles of human thinking, to which all philosophy has virtually done homage. Let us see the results.

Reid's system is usually termed the philosophy of "common sense," that is to say, one which accepts the primary beliefs ordinarily received by all

¹ In our former edition we ventured to ask the Edinburgh philosopher, "Why he had neglected the office of raising Scotland to that high rank of reputation which it formerly enjoyed among the philosophical countries of Europe." We could not have had the *commencement* of a more satisfactory reply, than that afforded by the above-mentioned Dissertations; and only hope that before the year is past it may be completed.

mankind as the ultimate criterion of truth. The first thing, then, to which the editor addresses himself is, to expound the meaning of the doctrine, and illustrate the purport of the argument of common sense.¹ To do this, he shows that in all reasoning we must sink back upon certain fundamental facts of consciousness; the only thing we have to guard against is, 1. "That we admit nothing unwarrantably—not even an original datum of consciousness itself; 2. That we embrace *all* which *are* original data of consciousness, with their legitimate consequences; and 3. That we exhibit each in its integrity, neither distorted nor mutilated. It is the want of observing these precautions which has led to the multiplication of philosophical systems, in every conceivable aberration from the unity of truth; so that philosophy has simply to return to *natural consciousness*, in order to return both to unity and truth."

The next point taken up, is to show the "legitimacy and legitimate *application* of the argument of common sense."² This proceeds on two suppositions—1. That the proposition to be proved by it is identical with, or necessarily evolved out of a primary datum of consciousness; and 2. "That the primary data of consciousness are one and all of them admitted to be true." These being granted, nothing hinders the argument of common sense from being valid for all purposes of philosophy.

¹ Note A. sec. 1.

² Note A. sec. 2.

The third point to be shown, is, that the above suppositions *must* be admitted; that they are strictly philosophical in their character; and that no exception, therefore, can be made against a system of philosophy which is professedly built upon them.¹

The fourth section proposes to investigate the essential characters by which the principles of common sense are discriminated. These are found to be—
1. Their incomprehensibility as to *why* they are;
2. Their simplicity; 3. Their necessity and absolute universality; 4. Their comparative evidence and certainty. These characters being determined, the last two sections enter into a long and learned historical investigation of the nomenclature of fundamental philosophy, and the general recognition of the principles of common sense by philosophers of every age and country.

In the second note (note B), the author proceeds to exemplify the distinction between presentative and representative knowledge, as affording a basis for the *true* theory of perception. The principal points of this distinction may be briefly stated. The one kind of knowledge is *simple*, the other *complex*; in the one, there is only a single object involved, in the other, there are two—the *reality* and the *idea*; the one is absolute, the other relative; the judgment involved in the one is assertatory, that in the other problematic; the one is self-suffi-

¹ Note A. sec. 3.

cient, the other is not self-sufficient; the one is complete or adequate, the other incomplete or inadequate. These may serve to explain the principal differences between a knowledge, which we obtain by a direct intuition, and that which is conveyed by a mediating idea, or conception. In the second section, the errors of Reid and other philosophers are pointed out, and the way paved for a clear and well defined doctrine on the subject.

In note C, the editor proceeds first to expound systematically the different schemes of external perception, which are to be found in the different systems of philosophy. Philosophers, in respect to the question of perception, have been either, 1. Presentationists; or, 2. Representationists. 1. Presentationists may proceed upon one of two plans. Either they may abolish the *representing* object, or they may abolish the *real* object. In the former case we have natural realism, as in Reid; in the latter, we have pure subjective idealism, as in Fichte. 2. Representationists are also of two kinds; either they make the representing image or idea a mode or modification of the mind itself, or they regard it as a separate existence. In the former case, we have a theory of ideas like Locke and Brown; in the latter, we have the ideal system of Aristotle or Democritus. For the minor shades of these doctrines, and Reid's precise position, we must refer our readers to the work itself, which will amply repay them for the closest investigation.¹

¹ Note C, sec. 1 and 2.

The next note (D) enters at length into the difficult question of the primary and secondary qualities of bodies, and gives a vast amount of information, critical and historical, upon the physiological question of sensation and perception. This being accomplished, the whole subject of perception is summed up by a contrast between the author's own views and those of the earlier Scottish school, together with certain historical notices on the "*rappports du physique et du moral*," in man. Some contributions towards a history and a theory of the doctrine of association, complete abruptly the dissertations so far as they at present extend; and must leave, we imagine, upon every mind that feels at all interested in such topics, the devout hope, that a work so auspiciously commenced, may ere long satisfy the anticipation it cannot but excite with reference to its early completion.

On the whole, we cannot but regard these dissertations as the most valuable contribution to the progress of a true philosophy, in our country, within the present century. There is no evasion of difficulties, no blenching of the intellectual eye before the pure light of the deepest truth; no dimness of vision accruing from the long and intense gaze within, which such subjects demand. On the contrary, we have the highest questions, which even the German mind can treat of, brought down into the light of "*common sense*," and see a far nearer approximation towards adjusting the respective claims of all the primary systems of Europe, than

has before been witnessed in the philosophical literature of our country.

SECT. II.—*The German School of the Nineteenth Century.*

We come now to that branch of the idealistic school, which if it has exceeded all others in obscurity, has also far excelled them in depth and originality. In entering upon the field of modern German metaphysics, we must bespeak beforehand the good-will of the reader, that he may not be easily offended with the strangeness of the phraseology, or the dryness of the abstractions; trusting that the pleasure of any new idea that is gained will compensate for the uninviting manner in which it may be communicated. On our own part, we shall divest the subject of its bristling formulas as far as we are able, and use the ordinary language of philosophy, whenever it can be done with advantage, without making the obscurity of the original still more obscure.

It should ever be kept in mind, that the great aim of the German philosophy is, in many respects, very different from the main purpose of intellectual science in our own country. The analysis of the powers and faculties of the human mind, which with us is the chief point, is among the Germans comprehended in one very subordinate division, generally termed psychology; while their *chief* endeavours are directed to the solution of the three

great problems, which relate to the existence and the nature of *God*, of the *universe*, and of *human freedom*. The phenomena, both of the internal and external world, are ever shifting; what exists this moment is gone the next; what is true for to-day, is not true for to-morrow. Now, our own philosophy, whether physical or mental, attempts not, for the most part, to go beyond the limits of this scene of phenomena, but, taking its position in the centre of it, seeks to observe the generic characters, which the phenomena themselves present, and arrange them in the most convenient order. Not so the philosophy of Germany. Convinced that mere phenomena cannot be self-existent realities, it begins by inquiring after the *principle* from which they spring; it seeks for a uniform and unchangeable basis, which underlies all the fleeting appearances of things; it demands truth which must be *eternally* truth, and from which, as the prime unconditioned existence, everything else has proceeded. Not content with knowing what *is*, it aims at discovering what *must be*; and then seeks to trace the whole creative process by which the universe in all its multiplicity has flowed by eternal laws from the self-existent *one*. The very first requisite, therefore, in understanding the rationale of the German philosophy, is to fix the eye of the mind upon the notion of "*the absolute*," and thus to pass mentally beyond the bounds of changing, finite, conditioned existence, into the region of the unchangeable, the infinite, the unconditioned.

That we have some idea (positive or negative) of an independent and absolute existence, from which all finite and dependent being has emanated ; that we have some notion of a first cause, from which all secondary causes are derived ; that our reason struggles to look beneath the veil of phenomena, that is spread before our senses, to the abiding reality in its eternal repose, which sustains them, is undeniable. Revelation *cannot* unfold to us the existence of this great first cause, since its whole authority rests upon that very fact, and it *does* not unfold to us the nature and constitution of the universe. If we would understand these things, we must philosophise ; we must look out upon the changing world, and our reason must there see the unchangeable basis which upholds it ; we must look in upon our finite and dependent minds, and view there the indestructible evidence for an infinite and independent Being, by which they too are sustained.

The philosophy of the absolute—that which seeks to penetrate into the *principles* of things—although it may seem strange to our modes and habits of thought, yet has played a great part in the scientific history of the world. It formed the basis of the ancient speculations of the Asiatic world. It characterised some of the most remarkable phases of the early Greek philosophy, particularly that of the Eleatic school. Plato, with all the lofty grandeur of his sublime spirit, sought for the absolute, in the archetypes existing in the Divine mind. The Alexandrian philosophers proposed to themselves

the same high argument ; mingling their theories with the mysticism of the East, and calling, even, to their aid, the lights of the Christian revelation. In more recent times Spinoza gave currency to similar investigations, which were soon moulded into a system of stern and unflinching pantheism ; and in him we see the model, upon which the modern idealists of Germany have renewed their search into the absolute ground of all phenomena. It is, in fact, in the various methods by which it is supposed that we are conducted to the absolute, whether by faith, intuition, or reason, that the different phases of the German metaphysics have originated ; and, consequently, it is by keeping our eye upon this point, that we shall possess the most ready key to their interpretation.

Before we proceed, however, to the exposition of the modern idealism, we must concentrate in a few lines the chief results of the Kantian philosophy, in order that we may thus keep up the historical connexion, and show the process by which the systems that flourish in the present century, have been developed.

According to Kant, there are three great faculties which compose our intellectual nature ; sense, understanding, and reason. All the *material* of our knowledge comes to us through the medium of the first, but it comes in a chaotic mass, without form, and void. The faculty which gives shape and distinctness to this material, and which thus forms it into notions, is the understanding. Then,

lastly, the reason is ever employed in generalising our notions, in making them as abstract as possible, and thus in giving to them a systematic unity. From this it follows, that the only true knowledge having objective reality answering to it, is that which lies within the bounds of our sense-perceptions ; that all else is merely *formal*, and, if supposed to be otherwise, must prove delusive and contradictory. It follows, moreover, that, as the bare matter of our notions comes from without, and everything which shapes them into distinct conceptions is communicated by the forms of our own understanding within, therefore all our knowledge of things beyond the mere fact that *they are*, is purely subjective, and, were our understandings differently constituted, might be entirely altered. The real objects we know to be actually present, otherwise all our knowledge would be formal, as in logic ; but they can only be *to us* what we feel them. Nothing can ever come to our knowledge at all, except through the medium of the laws of our own subjective faculties ; so that, what we see in matter is not its real qualities, but a reflection of the forms of our own understanding. It is to be remembered, also, that when we speak of the *material* of our knowledge coming through the senses, all we are to understand by this material is bare phenomenon ; for Kant proceeded to show that the purely rational ideas of matter, of the soul, and of God, are but personifications of our own modes of thinking, and cannot be shown *scientifically* to have any objective

reality answering to them ; although it is quite conceivable that this *may* be the case, and quite impossible to prove ought to the contrary.¹

Now, in these conclusions there is a twofold element involved ; there is, on the one hand, something without, which is independent of our subjective activity, and which exerts a direct influence upon our minds (for Kant assumed as indisputable the veracity of our sense-perceptions) ; and on the other hand there is the strongest possible tendency to pure subjective idealism ; for the element given in sensation was not only regarded as mere phenomenon, but also as having in it no distinctness, no form, no property, nothing, in fact, by which it could be marked, known, or defined, until it was shaped into notions by means of the understanding, and in accordance with its subjective laws. These two points, then, in the Kantian philosophy have given rise to a double stream of speculation in the more modern metaphysical schools of Germany. Jacobi, on the one side, laid hold of the *realistic* element, and strove to assign it a still higher place amongst the first principles of human knowledge than was allowed by Kant himself ; and Herbart carried out the tendency thus commenced by making the real objective fact given in perception (*das faktisch Gegebene*) the very foundation stone of his system. On the other side Fichte, develop-

¹ It will be remembered that Kant counteracted the scepticism to which his theoretic philosophy led, respecting morals and natural theology, by the conclusions of his practical philosophy.

ing Kant's subjective and *idealistic* tendency, easily snapped asunder the slender thread by which the objective world retained its hold upon our theoretical belief, and made all existence absolutely synonymous with *thought*. This branch has been since followed up by the still more extraordinary speculations of Schelling and Hegel.¹ These six names, then, Kant, Jacobi, Herbart, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, stand at the head of well-nigh all that is original and peculiar in German philosophy; the other writers have merely afforded different phases of the same ideas, or applied them to other objects, or attempted a reconciliation between the different schools above indicated.

As the idealistic side of the Kantian philosophy is, without question, the pre-eminent, it will, perhaps, be most natural to commence with the great branch of metaphysical speculation, which we have regarded as having taken its rise from that source. Jacobi would, doubtless, have claimed the prior notice, chronologically considered; but the element of *faith* which he introduced to supply the deficiency of reason, removes him more properly to the ranks of the mystics; while Herbart, who came much later, is scarcely intelligible, until we know something of the purer idealistic systems against which his whole philosophy was directed. In the present section, therefore, we shall first trace the

¹ On the classification of the Modern German Philosophy, see Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," p. 419, *et seq.*

regular development of the ideal philosophy from the close of the last century to its culminating point as seen in Hegelianism ; next, we shall exhibit the method by which Herbart sought to uphold a realistic philosophy in direct opposition to the other prevailing systems ; and, lastly, we shall allude to the still more recent manifestations, which speculative philosophy has exhibited on the ever fruitful soil of Germany. The consideration of Jacobi we must, of course, reserve for the chapter on mysticism, where we shall find the faith-element, he introduced, combining with the other rationalistic systems, and thus filling up a very considerable space in the philosophical history of the present century.

The intelligent reader can now start, we trust, with a distinct idea of the position which Kant holds in the road to subjective idealism. The prevailing and most fruitful notion in his philosophy is that of *self* ; for, although the idea of a really existing *not-self* in nature is allowed, yet all we know of it is, as it were, a mere surface without any characters, which reflects back the subjective forms of our own understanding ; and, although the conception of *God* is also acknowledged, yet, scientifically, it cannot be regarded as anything else than the generalising power of our own reason personified. Still, with all this, so long as the veracity of our sense-perceptions, and, consequently, the reality of outward phenomena, was accepted as a fact, resting without need of further proof, upon the direct

testimony of our consciousness, there was, of course, an *empirical* as well as a *rational* element in his philosophy.

Reinhold, however, perceiving that there were two original elements of consciousness admitted by Kant as the basis of his philosophy, namely, the *forms* of our personal activity on the one side, and the *material* of our thoughts as given in perception on the other, proposed to supply an analysis of consciousness itself, to attain in that way a single instead of a double basis for philosophy, and thus to complete the system which Kant had so skilfully commenced. This proposition of Reinhold, to find the foundation-principle of all philosophy in the depths of our own consciousness, proved in fact the transition-point between the doctrine of Kant and that of Fichte, whose first idea was not by any means to introduce a new theory, but only to show how the Kantian metaphysics, which had been attacked by the scepticism of Schulze and Maimon, might obtain a solid and uniform foundation. To this celebrated author, then, we must now revert.

John Gottlob Fichte was born at Rammenau, in the year 1762; became a student at Jena in 1780; from 1784 to 1793 was occupied in private tuition; and then received an appointment as professor of philosophy in Zurich, where he married a relation of the poet Klopstock. After remaining there only one or two sessions, he was invited to a chair in Jena, where he enjoyed a few sessions of happiness, in conjunction with some of the first minds of the

age, which were then gathered together at that university. In 1795, he relinquished his post at Jena, and became co-editor with Niethammer of a Philosophical Journal. This office he held till the year 1798, when, in consequence of an article which appeared to savour of atheism, he was frowned upon by the Weimar government, and, consequently, took up his residence in the Prussian states. His arrival in Berlin excited some attention, and his lectures were attended by men of the first rank and ability, until he was induced to leave that place also, by an invitation to the chair of philosophy at Erlangen. The French war next unsettled his repose, and obliged him to fly successively to Königsberg and Copenhagen, in order to avoid all connexion with a nation and an enemy, for whom, in common with every true German, he had the greatest abhorrence. In 1807, he returned to Berlin, and undertook, in connexion with many others, who were appointed for that purpose, the organisation of the university; in the precincts of which he delivered, during the first winter, his celebrated "Addresses to the German Nation." He remained there occupying some of the most important and responsible stations in the university, until the freedom war broke out in 1812, when he became excited in behalf of his country to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. He was not destined, however, long to take a share in the struggles of his fatherland; for his wife, having contracted fever from her attention to the sick and the wounded, he only witnessed

her recovery, himself to fall a victim to the same disease. His death took place on the 12th of January 1814, in the fifty-second year of his age. Such was the eventful life of one of the greatest thinkers which Germany ever produced.

In attempting to explain, connectedly, Fichte's philosophical principles, we must remember, that in early life he had entered fully into that portion of the Kantian metaphysics, which teaches us to regard all the properties of external objects as determined by the laws of our own understanding. According to this, we know everything only as, by virtue of our faculties, we *represent* it to our minds. The forms of our sensational faculty, the categories of the understanding, the conceptions of pure reason—these, in the Kantian philosophy, are the necessary and unalterable ideas under which everything, both in the material and spiritual world, is viewed. For a considerable period Fichte remained faithful to these Kantian doctrines; but after having read the sceptical writings of Schulze and Maimon, he became at length convinced that Kant had not built his system upon a foundation sufficiently deep and immovable. The objective reality of our sense-perceptions, was, on his hypothesis, *taken for granted*, without any reason being assigned for it; so that here was one whole branch of that system resting upon an empirical basis, and therefore, as he supposed, lying out of the region of strict scientific truth. Fichte's object was to find out what we can be said absolutely to *know*, and having discovered

this, to erect a system, not of philosophy, but of rigid scientific knowledge, against which no scepticism could possibly rear an objection. Hence it was that, in place of "*Philosophy*," he assumed the term "*Wissenschaftslehre*," as most designative of his great purpose.

Scientific truth, according to Fichte, is that which, starting from *one* self-evident basis, infers every succeeding position, step by step, with demonstrative certainty.¹ But then the question is, where must we start from, in order to be perfectly secure in every succeeding deduction? Not, as Kant did, from the supposition of an objective world standing co-ordinate, and as though it were equally certain with the facts of consciousness; but simply and solely from those facts themselves. All we are immediately conscious of, argues Fichte, are the states and processes of our own thinking self. Our sensations, perceptions, judgments, impressions, ideas, or by whatever other name they are designated, these form the material of all the knowledge which is immediately given us—knowledge which no sceptic, not Hume himself, ever disputed; nay, which cannot be disputed without our performing, in order to do so, one of the very processes, and admitting some of the very conceptions, whose existence we dispute.

Knowledge, therefore, that which has about it no element of mere faith, must commence absolutely

¹ See his "*Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre*," Preface; also p. 10. *et seq.*

and solely with my subjective self. Whatever I experience immediately, *i. e.* whatever forms a part of my own direct consciousness, is surely and certainly known—known in a manner, in which nothing whatever can possibly be, that does not pass through my real mental experience. Suppose, for a moment, that there were an objective world : how could we affirm this to be the case, when everything, that lies without us, can only become known at all by passing through our own consciousness? If it be said, that our inner consciousness is so formed as to give us a perfect representation of the world without, then we may reply, How can you verify this fact? The means of verifying it, if they exist at all, must arise from the capacity of comparing the reality with the representation—a process which implies (what has just been given up) the power of perceiving things out of the consciousness, without any representation whatever. We can only attempt to verify our first representation of things, by making another representation of them ; try as we will, therefore, we must, after all, confess that we have an immediate consciousness, and consequently an immediate knowledge, *only* of our subjective states ; and that, if anything do lie beyond them, we can only come to the knowledge of it through their medium. Such is Fichte's fundamental position.

But it might be urged, again, that our intelligence is so formed, that we are obliged to accept our inner consciousness as a veritable picture of the external world. To this, Fichte rejoins, that the very intel-

ligence which obliges us to do so is purely subjective ; it is but the name we give to our own mental constitution ; so that, after all, we do not get a step beyond the circle of our own selves. And if, lastly, the opponent should give up all idea of representation, and urge that we are so constituted, that it is absolutely *necessary* to suppose the real existence of material things around us, then our philosopher reiterates the same argument as before, and urges in reply, that we do so only as *necessitated* by our own inward faculties, or the laws of our own subjective reason ; so that we find ourselves still confined within the circle of our subjectivity, without the possibility of getting a sure passage into the external world. What we *know* is simply the contents of our own consciousness ; if there *is* an objective world, it can only exist to us when it becomes part and parcel of those contents.

Now, in pursuing this line of argument, Fichte did not intend to deny practically the reality of external things ; all he intended was to give an exact natural history of the human mind ; to show in what its knowledge commences ; of what it consists ; and within what limits it is confined. In other sciences men may *assume* the objective, and proceed accurately enough on that assumption ; but in philosophy, properly so called, (*i. e.* in Wissenschaft,) where nothing is to be assumed, and every point *known*, he considered that a rigid consecutive method did not allow us to go a single step beyond what is to us absolutely real, namely, the facts of

our own mental experience. He imagined the mind to be, as it were, an intelligent eye, placed in the central point of our inward consciousness, surveying all that takes place there ; and it was from that point of view (the only absolute and scientific one) that he wished to give an account of our moral and intellectual history, detailing the rise, the progress, and all the events of our real inward life, from its commencement to its maturity. Whether the scenes which take place within this subjective circle, betoken any objective existence or not, that was to him a matter of no consequence ; well he knew that, if this were the case, it was only just in proportion as the objects could lay aside, as it were, their objectivity, and transport themselves within the subjective sphere of the mind's vision, that they could be observed and known ; or what is the same thing, that *to us* they could *exist*. The real history of every man, urged Fichte, is the history of his mind, the flow of his conscious existence ; for what are to us woods, mountains, trees, or stars, but names we attach to certain facts of our consciousness ? what are all forms of the material world, but certain visions which have passed through our own minds — sensations which we have inwardly experienced ?

This being the case, the next inquiry is, Are we, in proceeding scientifically, to regard the *supposed* objective reality around us as the *generative principle* of our subjective states ; or are we to consider our subjective states as the generative principle of the supposed objective reality ? Do we experience sub-

jective phenomena (as, *e.g.*, sensations) because there are objective existences around us? or do we suppose objective existences to exist, because we experience certain subjective phenomena? Scientifically speaking, there can be no doubt but that to us the subjective is the primitive; from this we take our start; on the ground of this we proceed; and if we believe in an objective world at all, it is only because our subjective states or laws of thought have led us to do so. What is immediately true to us, are our *sensations*, *perceptions*, and *ideas*—it is our reason which *supposes* an external world, in order to account for them. Whatever, therefore, the real fact may be to the eye of the Creator, the only scientific plan *we* can proceed upon, is to analyse our own consciousness, to regard *self* as the absolute principle, and to view everything else as constructed, so far as we are concerned, by the necessary exertion of its own subjective laws. Man begins by observing the facts of his consciousness; on the faith of those facts he conceives for himself all the forms of the external world; in those facts he remains shut up till he leaves the stage of his earthly existence. Philosophy, therefore, must disregard everything else, and confine itself simply to this subjective sphere. To it nature is nothing, mind is everything, for nature is only known as imaged in the mind.

In constructing, then, a science upon these principles, we must first look attentively at the consciousness itself in its primitive state. We find, in doing

so, that as far back as our recollection goes, sensations, perceptions, representations of various kinds, and in various degrees of intensity, have ever existed there. How they have come, it is not for us to explain ; all we know is, that they are there, apparently in accordance with the original constitution of the active, thinking principle, which we term mind, or self. In some of our mental processes we are conscious of putting forth our own free activity ; but in the case now before us—that of our sensations—the mind apparently is not free ; on the contrary, it feels itself constrained, opposed, determined. We are *obliged* to have certain feelings, and to possess certain objects in our consciousness ; and the only reason we can give for it is, that we are so formed by nature, and that the spontaneous activity of our minds is such as necessarily to produce them. Feeling ourselves, however, thus circumscribed, we imagine that an actual reality out of us exists, from which this resistance proceeds ; in other words, we objectify the laws by which our activity is limited, in order to explain the phenomena of that limitation, and call it *matter*.

Let any one, says Fichte, regard the facts of our experience from the subjective point of view we have above explained, and see whether the description of them which is there given, is not literally a true one. The ordinary procedure of philosophers has usually been exactly the reverse. They have first *assumed* an external world, and then from that assumption have explained all the facts of our consciousness

which come within the limits of sensation. The true scientific procedure, however, is undoubtedly this : I am conscious of certain feelings, certain representations, certain inward pictures so to say ; and in order to account for them, I *infer* the existence of external things. To say *first* that the objects exist, and *then* that our sensations come from them, just reverses the chronological order of the process, and is no other than involving ourselves in a vicious circle, by reasoning first, that our sensations exist because there are objects present to cause them, and then, that real objects must be present, *because* we have the sensations. Two realities cannot be mutually generative of each other ; the one must be the antecedent, the other the consequent ; and in this case there can be no hesitation in assigning the fact of consciousness as the antecedent, since it is only through it, that we could ever come to have the slightest idea of any objective reality.

The true history of our inner life's experience, then, from the subjective point of view, is the following. The mind is first of all unconsciously active ; in this unconscious or spontaneous activity, we soon find ourselves limited by the laws of our being ; and then, ere we come to the idea of self as the real subject of all these experiences, we throw ourselves entirely into the contemplation of these limitations, objectify them, and term them an external world. After a time, however, the spontaneous action of the mind begins to give way to the reflective ; we become gradually conscious of our own activity ; we

recall our thinking self from its absorption in what it regards as an outward world ; we commence reading the contents of our own consciousness *as such* ; and at length find that the mind alone is the sphere of its own operations ; that it is at once subject and object, the absolute starting point, and the sole sphere of all scientific knowledge.

The necessity of certain limitations existing to the mind's activity is seen from the fact, that were it not so, we should lose ourselves in the infinite ; we should never come to a resting point, never have any clear and defined perceptions ; all this, however, is prevented by the original constitution of our being, which keeps us within proper bounds, and stops us at certain limits, which limits we term outward and material reality. This is what Fichte means when he speaks of those "inexplicable absolute limitations," which in his system are to take the place of external things ; he puts the inward conscious reality in the place of what is with other philosophers the outward object ; he puts the perception in place of the thing perceived ; the feeling of resistance or limitation in place of the matter which resists and limits ; in a word, he views every thing subjectively from the central point of his own consciousness, describes everything as it appears from thence, and makes that point the pedestal of his whole system.

Let it be remembered, however, that it is only in the theoretical point of view, that we are compelled to this rigid course of reasoning. If we are required

to describe what we can positively know, all we can do is to give the history of our consciousness. Whatever has passed there we know to have been, as far as we are concerned, A REALITY ; whatever lies beyond it, can be the object of faith, but not of science. In the practical point of view, however, where we can step from the region of knowledge into that of faith, external things again find their real meaning and importance ; they become then the work-tools of our life's activity, the instruments by which we perform our duty and attain our destiny.¹

Having given this general description of the nature and spirit of Fichte's subjective idealism, we shall now point out the formal and technical method by which he expressed and systematised these results.

Let it be premised that the *absolute* principle of all philosophy must be found within us, since it is our subjective states alone, which we can know immediately, and which can afford, therefore, a certain ground to start from. But on looking within, all we are conscious of are certain *acts* or *processes* ; of the substance of the mind, of pure essential spirit, we know absolutely nothing. The clearest notion, then, which we have of the mind is, that it is the *power of thinking* ; the clearest that we

¹ For a popular view of Fichte's method, similar, but somewhat more detailed than what we have given above, consult Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," chap. vii. For the same purpose, Fichte's small treatise, "Ueber den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre," which was the first idea he gave of his peculiar philosophy, can be read with advantage.

have of the consciousness, that it is the point or focus in which all our thoughts unite, and from which they appear to emanate.

In order, therefore, to obtain a starting point for a system of pure science, we must look steadfastly into our own consciousness, and find some act of the mind's own spontaneous production, which can be regarded in every way as axiomatically true: such being found, it would give us the absolute and unconditional principle of all human knowledge.¹ This primitive act is none other than the principle of identity (*Satz der Identität*) $A = A$, a principle which is unconditionally certain, both as to its matter and its form. No one will dispute the proposition $A = A$, when it is not enunciated as though A implied any particular existence, but simply hypothetically—that if A *is*, then it is equal to A . And yet, in affirming $A = A$, I pass a judgment—I think; and in doing so I affirm myself—so that the identity of *the me* is here asserted, and the proposition becomes $\text{Ego} = \text{Ego}$. It will be seen at once, that in laying down this as the absolute starting point, Fichte came very near to the foundation principle of Descartes—*Cogito ergo sum*.²

¹ “*Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre*,” p. 12, *et seq.*, and “*Sonnenklarer Bericht*,” p. 218.

² “*Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*,” p. 4, *et seq.*

N.B.—This is the work usually referred to simply as *Wissenschaftslehre*. There are other heads of lectures in his posthumous works, which have the same title.

The second absolute principle is the category of *negation*, which may be thus expressed, — A is not $= A$. This proposition is conditional as to matter, because it depends upon the previous truth $A = A$, but it is unconditional as to form. Viewed as an absolute act of the mind, the equation becomes, The not-me is not $=$ the me. By the former proposition the me affirmed itself; by this second act, the me affirms a not-me; that is, it places something before it, which is opposed to self. In other words, in the one case the mind views itself as the absolute subject:—*now* it views itself as *object*, forming thus the opposition which is necessary to every act of consciousness.¹

The first of the above propositions is an absolute affirmation—the second an absolute negation. But these two comprise a contradiction in themselves; so that we need a third principle, by which the positive and negative shall be united. Now the union of the positive and negative gives the notion of *limitation*; and consequently the third formula of fundamental philosophy may be thus expressed:—The me affirms itself to be determined by a not-me, and vice versâ; a formula which is conditional both in its matter and form.²

Here then we have the primitive and absolute processes of the mind, as a pure activity. First, it asserts its own being—an absolute subject:—next

¹ Wissenschaftslehre, p. 17, *et seq.*

² Ibid, p. 23, *et seq.*

it affirms the existence of something opposed to itself—an absolute object:—lastly, it solves this contradiction, by showing that the positive and negative, the subject and object, limit and determine each other; so that as the one rises to view, the other disappears. In this hovering between subject and object, all our knowledge is cradled.¹

Having laid down the absolute principles of *all* science, Fichte proceeds to divide the *Wissenschaftslehre* into two parts, the theoretical and the practical. From the foregoing propositions, two principles result. 1. That the me affirms itself to be determined by a not-me; and, 2. That notwithstanding this, the not-me is itself affirmed, and determined by the me. The former of these is the basis of theoretical science, the latter of practical.²

1. Of Theoretical Science. Here we have to view and explain all the phenomena which result from the mind's activity being determined by what appears to be an object. These phenomena are of course the different *relations* which the me holds to the not-me, the subject to its self-affirmed object. Now if we regard the me and the not-me as *mutually* determining and limiting each other (which is shown in the third fundamental axiom), this gives us the category of *action* and *reaction*.³

¹ These three principles correspond with Kant's three judgments—Affirmation, negation, and limitation—or thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

² See Michelet's "Geschichte der letzten Sys." vol. i. p. 458.

³ *Wissenschaftslehre*, p. 58.

Again, if we regard the me as itself giving its reality to the not-me, and in so far becoming passive to its influence, we have the category of cause and effect—action and suffering.¹ Lastly, according as we regard the me as embracing all reality in itself, or admitting other reality beside, we get the notions of substance and accident.² Here then we have all the elementary ideas, which go to form the conception of an external object—we have substance and accident, cause and effect, action and reaction. It only remains further to show by what process the object itself is placed clearly before the mind's vision as a concrete reality. To see this it must be clearly kept in memory, that the law of the mind's activity presents the constant phenomenon of the mutual action and reaction of subject and object, of the me and not-me, upon each other. The imagination here comes into play, and pictures, as it were, this process—this action and reaction; holding it up, as though it were a reality, clearly before our own consciousness. The consequence is, that we view the reality which the me takes from itself, and attributes to the not-me, as a veritably existing thing, out of ourselves—the representation which the imagination gives us, being thus objectified. This phenomenon is what we usually term perception, and it only requires the further operation of the understanding, and the judgment, to make the whole

¹ Wissenschaftslehre, p. 62, *et seq.*

² Ibid. p. 69.

process complete, and thus place an external world with all its relations, and created from the subjective laws of the mind's own action, before our view.¹

On the foregoing theory, Fichte considered, that the problem of realism and idealism was fully resolved, inasmuch as the nature of the relation that subsists between the perceiving mind and the object of its perceptions, is at length unfolded. The mind itself is the absolute principle and source of every thing; by its original and spontaneous movement it constructs for itself the notion of an external world, and again by its reflective movement it comes back to the perception of its own personal exertion put forth in the whole process. The idea of the objective arises from the self-limitation of our own free activity, and answers to a mental *affection*; the idea of the subjective arises from the direct consciousness of our free activity, and answers to a mental *exertion*. The one serves to develop the notion of the other; without subject, there is no object perceived; without object, there is no subject. The *me* affirms or constructs the not-me, and the not-me, on the other hand, determines the *me*; and consequently the claims of realism and idealism here unite, and the absolute principle of all knowledge is discovered in the centre of our own consciousness. Thus, at length, the great fundamental question of philosophy, that which seeks to determine the relation of thought and existence, is settled, because all existence is shown to be synonymous with thought, and

¹ Wissenschaftslehre, p. 175 to 200.

the union of the two notions is found in the spontaneous movement of the mind itself.

From these principles, again, Fichte derives a psychological explanation of all the different phenomena of the human mind. If we reflect upon the laws by which our activity is limited, and see them producing, as it were, the obstacle which the *me* affirms, as opposed to itself, (according to the second fundamental axiom—*Das ich setzt sich ein nicht-ich entgegen*,) the result is termed a feeling or sensation. Again, when the mind loses itself in the object perceived, and thus sees in the *me* a something which appears altogether the production of the *not-me*, we term it a *perception*. (By this Fichte explains the phenomena of continuity, of extension, of *time*, and of *space*.) The power by which a sensation is fixed and retained, is that usually termed the *understanding*. The *judgment* is that which unites the free working of the mind (termed *imagination*) with the understanding, producing a free decision upon the various objects which our understanding creates; and, lastly, if we overcome all limitations, and view the mind alone in its free all-producing power, we have the highest faculty in man, that denominated *pure reason*.¹ To attain this point is not possible in the theoretical, but is seen first in the practical branch of philosophy. The object of the theoretical division of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, therefore, is now accomplished. All

¹ *Wissenschaftslehre*, 203, *et seq.*

the different determinations of the *me* by the *not-me*, are explained. The categories of our experimental knowledge are all deduced; the phenomena of consciousness as engaged in the production of our sensations, perceptions, and judgments, are expounded; and we are brought to the point, where the whole process is to be seen, as the pure production of the mind's own certainty. This leads us to consider,

II. The practical side of Fichte's philosophy. In the theoretical part of the system we have seen that *the me* is determined by a *not-me*; that there are certain limitations of its own free and intelligent activity, a certain resistance (*Anstoss*) to its own powers of conception, which are personified and regarded as external realities. This circumscribing of our freedom, and the consequent necessity of imagining a material world around us, we are unable *theoretically* to account for: all we can say is, that such is the constitution of our consciousness, such the truth of things as given in our own experience, and that we can go no further towards an explanation of the phenomenon. In the practical view of the case, however, we can go one step further back; we can show that the limitation of our free intelligence does not arise from any foreign source, but may be deduced from the original, though unconscious activity of the mind itself. All this is deducible out of the fundamental axiom of the practical division of Fichte's system, namely—That the *not-me* is affirmed as determined by the *me*.¹

¹ *Wissenschaftslehre*, p. 228, *et seq.*

To show this, we must observe that mind, though positively free, though viewed abstractedly only in the light of pure spontaneous activity, whose essence is independence and self-existence, yet is not by any means a vague, aimless, useless activity. It has a purely rational nature, by virtue of which it sets before itself its own aim, the object of its own free activity. To deny this would be to deny the very existence of mind itself: to ask why it is so, would be to ask why truth is truth. The mind, or, as Fichte always terms it, *the me*, ever strives after self-development; it seeks to realise fully its own nature, and to bring into actual existence all that lies potentially in its consciousness. This perpetual striving after self-development is the most profound and essential truth of our existence; it is the centre of our activity, the one realistic point around which all that activity revolves, and for which it is all put forth—the uniting point of the absolute, the practical, and the intelligent *self*.¹

Here, then, we can show the *reason* of the limitation of our free intelligence. The mind striving after its self-formed aim would proceed onwards in its progress into infinity—it would thus find no point at which to stop, nothing to give a determination to its activity, no means of becoming a cause of something else. Accordingly, to prevent this, it places an obstacle in its own way—it supposes a real objective existence, and in this manner gives defi-

¹ Wissenschaftslehre, p. 236, *et seq.*

nitence and satisfaction to its own inward practical impulse. From this point we see the utility, yea, the necessity, of supposing a material world around us. Without it we could never realise our duty, or have the material necessary for working out our destiny. "The world," says Fichte, "is the sensized material of our practical life, the means by which we place before us, as object, the aim and end of our existence."¹

The whole principle of practical or moral philosophy, then, is easily deduced from the original activity of *the me*, as the absolute, the self-determined existence. The law of our duty, the categorical imperative, as Kant has it, is the original striving of mind after self-development; and since activity is both the essence and the end of our being, everything else is constructed by it in order to subserve this great purpose. So far, therefore, is Fichte from subverting, in his practical philosophy, the complete idealism of his theoretical, that we find idealism here in its purest and most elevated form. It is the practical view of human nature which gives us the reason or ground of the phenomenon which we term *matter*; showing us that the limitations of our intelligence or the obstacles to our activity, (which in his system take the place of objective reality,) are the necessary product of the mind itself in its attempts to accomplish its duty, and at length to realise its final destiny. Having

¹ See Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," chap. viii.

thus, in his "Wissenschaftslehre," laid down the absolute axioms of all science, and then developed them successively in their theoretical and practical aspects, Fichte went boldly forward to show the application of his principles to the other branches of philosophical inquiry. The work to which we have chiefly referred in the preceding sketch, came out in the year 1794. In 1796 appeared his "Naturrecht," in which he has contemplated man in society; and in 1798 his "Sittenlehre," in which we have a complete system of moral philosophy. The latter led him into the province of religion; and *here*, too, he did not shrink from carrying out his scientific principles to their full, and, we may add, their fatal extent.

That such a system of subjective idealism as we have portrayed, could arrive at no conclusion respecting the existence of God, is almost self-evident. If we look out into the universe, what do we see? Simply the reflex of our own activity, the objectified laws of our own being. If we ask after the Creator of the universe, therefore, the answer returned is, that it is created by *ourselves* for the sake of realising our own self-development. Self being once laid down as the absolute principle of all philosophy, we can never get beyond it so as to affirm the objective reality of aught, either in the material or spiritual world. The only God we can affirm is simply the idea of moral order—an idea to which we can only by a logical fallacy append the notion of any essential and personal existence. To have

an idea of God, is to limit him, that is, to destroy the very notion of an infinite being ; so that, in fact, every precise notion we form of God must be an *idol*. It was from this conclusion that originated the reputation of atheism which Fichte incurred, and which drew down upon him the enmity and opposition of many both of the learned and the great.¹

It will be seen from the above sketch, that the philosophy of Fichte brought to a complete consummation the subjective idealistic tendency. With him the idea of nature, and the idea of God, absolutely vanished : self became the sole existence in the universe, and from its own absolute power and activity everything else, human and divine, was constructed. Notwithstanding the results to which his philosophy led, it is still impossible to read any of his more celebrated writings without being struck with admiration at the powerful eloquence, the unwearied energy of thought, the close and almost pitiless logic, with which he compels you on from one conclusion to another. So far from answering to the idea of a mystic recluse, dreaming away life in the midst of the ethereal and shadowy creations of his own fancy, we venture to affirm that never was there a man more intensely practical ; never one more formed to struggle with the stern and

¹ These conclusions are found, perhaps most distinctly, in Fichte's treatise, "Ueber den Grund unseres Glaubens an eine Göttliche Weltordnung." It should be stated, however, that he rebutted with great energy the charge of atheism ; and appeared, indeed, to have started back from the sweeping conclusions to which he was originally led.

bitter sufferings of life ; never one who was more able to dispel the shadows and phantoms that deluded the world, and to gaze upon everything in its naked reality ; never a mind more clear, more deep, more sternly logical, more solemnly earnest, than was that of Fichte. His orations to the German people are amongst the finest specimens of patriotic enthusiasm, and his conduct was in accordance with the fire of his discourse : his philosophy throughout bore the stamp of a mind inured, to an almost unexampled degree, to abstract thinking, and his life gave a perfect mirror of that philosophy, inasmuch as the independence of his spirit was ever asserting its own native liberty, and ever breaking with unceasing effort through the shackles by which it was confined.¹

The fundamental error which Fichte committed in his philosophy, was that of intrenching himself so closely within the circle of his consciousness, that it was impossible to find any scientific passage from thence into the objective world. The difference between those operations of the mind which are purely rational or purely imaginative, and those which connect us with the world without, was entirely overlooked. In opposition to this, we might maintain, that consciousness, to which he appealed as the supreme judge, testifies most clearly, that while the notions involved in memory, in judgment, &c., depend simply upon the subjective power of

¹ Michelet's "Geschichte," vol. i. p. 434.

those faculties, our *perceptions* come from a foreign source, and contain an objective element which, in each instance, combines with our subjective self. Fichte, indeed, acknowledges that this is the *phenomenon* presented in perception; he admits that we *seem* to be really conscious of an opposing and limiting force, or in his own words, of a *not-self*; but he attempts to account for this by supposing, that there are certain absolute and inexplicable limits (absolute unerklärliche Schranken) in the very constitution of our own minds, and that the obstacle (Anstoss) to our free activity presented by that which we term the objective world, is self-constituted according to the laws of our intellectual nature. It is just at this critical point, the point which determines the complete subjectivity of his whole system, that Fichte has failed, and become involved in absurdity. He supposes mind to be pure spontaneous activity, and yet he assigns to it certain limits lying within its own nature; in other words, he makes it to be in the very nature of a perfectly free and spontaneous being to have some limit to its freedom—an idea which plainly implies a contradiction in terms.¹

This limitation or obstacle which holds so important a place in the system before us, was, in fact, never satisfactorily explained; and while it presented an insoluble point itself, it prevented the full and final solution of the great problem of ideal philoso-

¹ Chalybäus, p. 178.

phy, *viz.* that of identifying thought and existence. The sphere of existence, in Fichte's system, was *supposed* exactly synonymous with the sphere of thought; but the unexplained limitation of the mind's activity implied the real existence of somewhat, altogether beyond the bounds of that consciousness; so that, after all, the conflicting claims of realism and idealism were not satisfied, thought and existence not absolutely identified in their source. Again, the very point which Fichte aimed at, that of reducing all our knowledge to one simple principle, was by no means accomplished. Several of our fundamental ideas are tacitly supposed, from the very beginning of his system. The notions of reality, activity, limitation, &c., are all made use of; and the principles of formal logic are employed, without any attempt to show from whence they are deduced. The *Wissenschaftslehre*, therefore, is *not* so fundamental and all-embracing as it would have us to believe: by employing ideas such as those above mentioned, it points us to something more primitive than itself.¹

It might further be objected against Fichte, that he never showed on what ground we are at liberty to conclude, that although the *me* and the *not-me* mutually determine each other, and only exist as determined by each other, yet that the *former* is a real

¹ This objection is stated very clearly by M. Rémusat, in the Introduction to his "Rapport," p. xlii. We may refer our readers to this work as containing one of the best critiques on Fichte which have yet appeared.

existence, and the *latter* a nonentity. If the one proves to be nothing *per se*, who shall say that the other may not prove the same; and who is to prevent the whole system before us from incurring the charge laid against it by Jacobi, of ending in absolute nihilism? Again; how is it to be accounted for, if to each individual the *me* is the absolute principle of all things, that there are so many absolute principles in the world? as many, in fact, as there are men? The only explanation of this point that can be attempted is, that it is not the *individual me* that manifests itself in every man, but the *absolute* or *divine me*, of which every man is an image or reflection. If the former hypothesis be taken, then the most absurd system of nihilism, as above indicated, is the result; if the latter, then we have Spinoza's doctrine over again in another form, and this pretended structure of a critical philosophy becomes, in fact, a purely dogmatical system, which, on Fichte's own principles, as an advocate of "*Wissenschaftslehre*," ought to be summarily rejected. That Fichte felt the force of these and similar objections made against his philosophy, is evident from the fact that he relinquished his purely subjective position, and afterwards attempted an entire revision of its fundamental principles. To these later views, therefore, we must now, in conclusion, briefly refer.

In the original form of his metaphysics, Fichte not only banished the idea of matter as a solid impenetrable substance, but allowed no other real existence

at all beyond that of a certain subjective activity (*Thätigkeit*), ever working in accordance with a given law or design. Mind was with him simply *action*, and every thing else was the product of mind, brought into being by virtue of the original laws, to which it is subjected. What we see in the world of objective existence, was with him simply the reflex of our own faculties; and to be a pure subjective idealist, was to absorb the whole notion of existence in that of *law*, the law of our personal activity. The office of sustaining a system of philosophy on this purely subjective basis, as we have seen, proved no easy task. The inquiry was perpetually urged, What is the ground or essence of the activity, which we term mind? Whence its laws, its limitations, its characteristics? Must there not be something real at the foundation of all these subjective phenomena? In truth, is not something of this nature admitted by the fact of your admitting an original constitution at all, by which the laws of our consciousness are determined? Questions of this description, together with many objections of a theological kind, gradually led Fichte to seek for another absolute principle, more deep and more comprehensive than the former, upon which his philosophy might securely rest.

On reflection he saw, that to deny all *real* existence in our perceptions, does not lead, as he intended it, to a system of pure scientific idealism, but rather, as we have shown, to a system of nihilism. Allow that our free activity represents certain

notions to itself, there must be, thought Fichte, something implied in them which *is represented*. Mere knowing can be nothing, unless there is something which is known; mere thinking can be nothing, unless there is something which is thought; and mere perception can be nothing, unless there is something which is perceived. To make our subjective activity in the act of knowing, perceiving, &c., *the absolute*, is to suppose, that the only reality in the universe is a perceiving which perceives nothing, a thinking which thinks nothing, a knowing which knows nothing.

But, then, the question returns, How is it possible to arrive at this real essential existence which is imaged and represented in our own minds? for the moment we attempt to do so scientifically, the old argument against representationism returns, which again seems to shut us up within our own consciousness. Pure subjective idealism, which admits no real existence beyond our own consciousness, is beset with difficulties on the one hand; but the ordinary dualism of philosophers is exposed to equal objections on the other hand. In the former case there is no basis, on which the superstructure can rest, to keep it from sinking into the abyss of nihilism; in the latter case we have no guarantee for the accuracy of the inward representation of the outward reality, and, consequently, no means of arriving at absolute knowledge at all. Is it not possible, then, thought Fichte, to find some *via media*, by which the difficulties of both these extremes could be avoided; by which a

foundation might be added to a system of idealism otherwise baseless, and a relief found for the contradictions of dualism. The only resource left was to grant *one absolute existence*, which is the same both in the subject and the object; to assert equally the reality of the me and the not-me, and with it the identity of both; to find a common principle from which all subjective and all objective phenomena spring, and to recognise in this principle an absolute subject-object. This thought, the origin of which is disputed between Fichte and Schelling, was the foundation of the doctrine of identity (*Identitätslehre*); a doctrine which, if it did really spring from the improved philosophy of the former, was only developed, as we shall soon see, to its proper form in the writings of the latter.¹

Under this view of the case the basis of Fichte's philosophy was now completely altered, although he still found a starting-point in *the me*. Instead of regarding *self* as the absolute, by which everything else is constructed, he now admitted an essential reality as the foundation both of self and not-self, and in this way attributed a real existence, although still a spiritual one, to the objective world. The doctrine of identity thus propounded, evidently had a close affinity with the pantheism of Spinoza. The only difference in the two lay here—that, while Spinoza fixed his eye upon the notion of *substance*, until he made it the absolute and infinite essence, of which all things existing are but different modi, Fichte still retained as firm as ever the notion of

¹ On this point, see Chalybäus, chap. viii.

free and intelligent activity, and regarded infinite reason, or if we will term it so, eternal mind or the Divine idea, as the absolute, all-real, self-existent essence, which manifests itself alike in the subjective and the objective world. According to this view, whatever we experience within ourselves and whatever we see without, are both alike the manifestations of one and the same absolute mind, *i. e.* of the Deity himself; not merely creations of his power, but actual modifications of his essence. The common idea of matter Fichte never for a moment re-admitted. He still held to his original position, that mind is the sole existence, that the whole universe is a spiritual universe, and that to speak of dead lifeless substance, lying as the substratum of what we term material properties, and of the laws of action, which we perceive around us, is going entirely beyond the region of our actual knowledge, and away from the plain indications of science. Nay, further, he did not allow that the objective world as such, can make any impression whatever upon the subjective self; but, as they are both forms and manifestations of the same Divine idea, he considered that we know, to a certain extent, the nature of what passes without us, from our direct consciousness or intuition of what passes within.

Although Fichte had thus gained a crude and indistinct notion of the doctrine of identity, yet he did not live to develop it in all its clearness, or to apply it to the laws and processes of nature in the world. The phenomena of the physical world, in-

deed, still constituted a dark and unresolved point in his philosophy ; objective existence, as seen in nature, was not yet placed on the same footing with subjective existence, as exhibited in the laws of mind ; the identity of the two was not completely thought out ; the phenomena of our sensations not fully explained ; the absolute unity of thought and existence, as attained in the infinite Being, not completely deduced. To perfect the doctrine of identity, and to apply it more especially to the world of nature, was the merit and the boast of his illustrious successor.

We shall just glance, therefore, in conclusion, at the principal works in which these modified views were expounded. The first work which gave decided indications of dissatisfaction with his original standpoint, was the “*Bestimmung des Menschen*” (Destination of Man), a popular rather than scientific treatise on human knowledge and destiny. The object of it is to show how the mind, when it once begins to philosophise, passes from doubt to science, and from science to a *faith*, which unfolds the real, and gives a solid basis for our confidence in immortality and in God. This was followed up by a little treatise of admirable clearness of thought, entitled, “*Lucid Intelligence offered to the public at large on the peculiar nature of the recent Philosophy*” (1801). No student of Fichte should overlook this brief exposition, which gives in little more than two hundred small pages, the chief points of his whole system in a popular form. But the most important work

of this era of Fichte's life was his "Characteristics of the present Age" (1806), the main object of which was to develop the philosophy of history. The foundation of his theory on this point is, that *God* ever reveals himself in and through the human consciousness. Every age of the world is preceded by some great idea, and to comprehend any given period aright, we must take a comprehensive view of the whole plan of human history as grounded upon ideas. Fichte divides the world's history into five eras. The first is the age, in which reason prevails simply as an *instinct*, or law of nature; the second is the age of *authority*, in which the primitive instinct is retained only by a few of the great men of their time; the third is the age in which authority and reason are both rejected, and universal *corruption* ensues; the fourth is the age of *science*, when reason in its reflective form begins to appear; and the fifth is the age in which reason reigns supreme. The famous "Discourses to the German People" may be regarded as the continuation of the philosophy of history, that, namely, in which the principles there laid down were applied to the interpretations of the state of Europe as it then existed. The little treatise on "The Nature of the Scholar," shows the great part which the man of genius has to play in the development of humanity; and lastly, the "Anweisung zum seligen Leben" (Way to a Blessed Life), winds up the whole system with a kind of lofty and stoical religious mysticism.

We may remark, in fine, that the latter form of

Fichte's philosophy was in many respects superior to the former. It not only overcame many of its contradictions, but pointed more decisively to a region in which faith could assure us of the reality of the world, of God, and of an immortality to come; in which the subjective limits of our rational nature could be surpassed, and life be rendered blessed in the confidence of our partaking the Divine nature here, and rising to the fuller participation of it hereafter. Much as the writings of this energetic thinker have lately fallen into neglect in his own country, yet it is unquestionable, that they lie more or less at the basis of all the modern German metaphysics; nor has philosophy since his time, found an advocate so clear, so earnest, so fervidly eloquent, as it found in him.¹

We must now pass on to the consideration of Schelling and his philosophy, by which we shall be brought almost into the midst of the discussions in which Germany is at present involved. Frederick William Joseph Schelling was born in January 1775, at Leonberg in Würtemberg. He studied first at Tübingen, where he formed an acquaintance with Hegel, while both were yet in their early youth. After this he went to Leipsic and Jena, where he devoted himself chiefly to medicine and philosophy, in the latter of which departments he attended the lectures of Fichte. In 1798, he succeeded Fichte in the chair of philosophy at Jena, and obtained, by the efforts of his then rising genius,

¹ See an account of Fichte's principal works in the Appendix, Note D.

the greatest approbation. In 1803, he accepted the professorship of philosophy at Würzburg, and in 1807 removed to Munich, where, with some few intervals, he resided up to the year 1841. His acceptance of a professorship at Berlin, in that year, excited the greatest attention throughout the philosophical world; without satisfying the expectations, however, which were aroused, he soon relinquished his arduous post, in order that he might end his days (which God grant him) in peace.

Schelling, as we have seen, came upon the stage just at the time when Fichte had carried his subjective philosophy to its very highest pitch. The notion of self had with him absorbed every other; the individual mind was made the absolute generating principle of all existence. By assigning, however, to mind certain limitations lying within its own nature, he unconsciously destroyed its absoluteness, and involved himself in inextricable contradictions. Schelling saw clearly, that the subjective tendency had been carried by him to an extreme; that it was necessary to return to the admission of some actual objective reality; and that the absolute must be found in something beyond the limits of our own individual consciousness. Whether the first notion of the doctrine of identity (that which traces both subject and object to one common source) was given by Fichte or Schelling, we cannot determine: certain it is, that the latter was the first to see the doctrine in all its clearness, and the first who employed it as the groundwork of a complete system of philosophy.

Before we enter more particularly into Schelling's philosophy, it will be useful to take a general view of his literary career, and point out the course which it has followed. This is more necessary, inasmuch as we nowhere find a complete system drawn out in one or more principal works, but rather a continued course of restless speculation, which developed itself in periodical publications. At the age of twenty years, Schelling not only showed an extraordinary talent for philosophical research, but had begun to separate (though but slightly) from the masters under whom he had studied. His first attempt was to elucidate the principle of "the Absolute" or unconditional, on which Fichte had taken his stand. To this era belong his "Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kriticismus," and more particularly his treatise "Vom Ich, als Prinzip der Philosophie." Starting from the absolute or unconditional, as containing in itself equally the me and the not-me, the subjective and the objective, he was next attracted to the *objective* element, which, he saw, ought to furnish a complete explication of the laws and processes of nature. Hence originated his Natur-Philosophie, which he first sketched out in his "Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur," carried on still further in the treatise "Von der Weltseele," and completed in his "Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Natur-philosophie."

Having thus developed the philosophy of nature, Schelling proceeded to the *subjective* element in human knowledge, the result of which was his "System des Transcendentalen Idealismus," which

is generally regarded as the masterpiece of his philosophical genius. The objective and subjective side of our knowledge being now completed, Schelling declared himself prepared to bring them to a perfect unity, by furnishing the philosophy of "*the Absolute itself*," and commenced the task of doing so in the "*Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik*." This task, however, he relinquished, and to the present day its completion remains a promise, with little chance of a performance.

The next literary labour in which Schelling engaged, was the "*Neue Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik*." In this we have the commencement of a new elaboration of his philosophy, from a somewhat modified point of view. In the former writings he had traced all things in nature and the soul up *to* the absolute; now he sought to show how they may be all deduced *from* the absolute. This movement of his philosophy was carried on in the work entitled "*Bruno*," and completed in that on "*Philosophie und Religion*."

Up to this point, Schelling had only elaborated the *negative* side of his philosophy; he had explained the *forms* and *ideas* of things, but had not reached their essence. The remaining works, therefore, are devoted to his *positive* philosophy; that, namely, in which he shows how the divine essence itself, in all its wondrous workings, is revealed immediately to the perception of the human mind. To this period belong his "*Untersuchungen über das Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit*," his work

on Mythology, "Ueber die Gottheiten der Samothrace," his Preface to Cousin's "Fragments," with some other articles, both in a journalistic and independent form.

Several of Schelling's minor works have been omitted in the above sketch, but it may suffice to show to our readers the course which his speculations have followed from first to last.

On entering into an analysis of Schelling's system, we must make a few preliminary remarks upon the method he has followed in his investigations. With him the great *organ* of philosophy is "intellectual intuition" (*intellectuelle Anschauung*), by means of which faculty, he supposes, we have an immediate knowledge of *the absolute*. This intellectual intuition is a kind of higher and spiritual sense, through which we feel the presence of the infinite both within and around us; moreover, it affords us a species of knowledge, which does not involve the relation of subject and object, but enables us to gaze at once by the eye of the mind upon the eternal principle itself, from which both proceed, and in which thought and existence are absolutely identical. Before the time when creation began, we may imagine that an infinite mind, an infinite essence, or an infinite thought (for here all these are one) filled the universe of space. This, then, as the self-existent ONE, must be the only absolute reality; all else can be but a developing of the one original and eternal being; and intellectual intuition is the faculty, by which we rise to the

perception of this, the sole ground and realistic basis of all things.¹

The absolute, from the first, contains in itself, potentially, all that it afterwards becomes actually by means of its own self-development; and the great aim of true philosophy is, first, to fix our eye upon this original essence, and then to show how everything is derived from it—that is, how from the absolute subject, or *natura naturans*, is derived the absolute object, or *natura naturata*. This primary essence is not, as Spinoza held, an infinite substance, having the two properties of extension and thought, but an infinite, acting, producing, self-unfolding *mind*—the living soul of the world. Unless we can disentangle ourselves from our unreflective habits of thinking, unless we can look through the veil of surrounding phenomena, unless by this spiritual vision we can realise the presence of the Infinite, the only real and eternal existence, we have not the capacity, said Schelling, to take the very first step into the region of speculative philosophy.²

If, however, we can view all things as the deve-

¹ On the *organ* of transcendental philosophy, see "System des Transcendentalen Idealismus." Introduction, sec. 4.

² "Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Natur-philosophie," p. 215, *et seq.* Here the principle of organisation itself, the living soul of nature, is described with great clearness and power, as a free and self-unfolding mind—the absolute in its lower potencies. See also the treatise "Von der Welt-seele," introduction, and first part. "Ich nehme die Materie," he says, "weder als etwas unabhängig von der absoluten Einheit Vorhandenes an, noch auch betrachte Ich sie als das blosse Nichts, sondern Ich stimme im Allgemeinen mit jenem Aus-

lopment of the original and absolute principle of life, reason, or being, then it is evident, conversely, that we may trace the marks of the absolute in everything that exists, and consequently may scan them in the operations of our own minds, as one particular phase of its manifestation. Every mind is the image or reflection of the eternal mind; every individual reason the exemplar of the infinite reason; and, therefore, by gazing inwardly upon the development of our own minds, we may learn the principle or process, by which everything else is developed likewise.¹

Now, in viewing our own consciousness for this purpose, we find that there is combined there the knowing and the known—the subject which perceives, and the object which is perceived. But, then, what is the process by which every such perception takes place, what the law of the mind's own activity? This, observes Schelling, was shown by Kant, when he assigned *time* and *space* as the two forms or categories of sensation. The notion of space arises from the mind's activity going forth, and expanding itself without limit, and in every direction; on the other hand, time is that which bounds and measures space—it is the reflex or attractive force, by which our activity is restrained, and which answers, therefore, to Fichte's "unex-

sprach des Spinoza überein, der antwortet.—Ich halte vielmehr die Materie für ein Attribut, das die unendliche und ewige Wesenheit in sich ausdrückt."

¹ Philosophische Schriften. Vom Ich als Prinzip der Phil. sec. 2. Also Transcend. Idealismus, p. 63, *et seq.*

plained limitations." The one is a positive force, the other a negative; and what we suppose to be a material existence is the result of these two forces,—the expansive giving the matter of it, the attractive the form.¹

Intellectual intuition sees both subject and object, knowing and known *combined* in our own consciousness; it regards them as being but the twofold law by which the soul operates; but ordinary and unphilosophical thinking views them as entirely separate, and regards the one movement, that in which thought is predominant, as the subject, and the other movement, that in which existence is the predominant notion, as the object, thus making a generic distinction, which does not really exist, between the mind within and the world without. Both, in fact, are one and the same essence running exactly parallel to each other; so that, if we begin with the objective side, we can easily deduce from it the subjective; and if we begin with the subjective, we can as easily deduce the objective. Hence, there are two kinds of philosophy, philosophy of nature and philosophy of spirit, both having their root in the absolute, and both affording a firm point from which we can take our departure. The office, therefore, of philosophy is, either from intelligence to construct a nature, or from nature to construct

¹ Von der Welt-seele. Introduction, über das Verhältniss des Realen und Idealen in der Natur.

an intelligence; thus showing that thought and existence have their ground in the same identical essence.¹

To make the subsequent part of our sketch more intelligible, we must now request the reader to fix his attention *closely* upon the law, or rhythm, by which the absolute, and everything else, as being a manifestation of the absolute, proceeds in its self-development. This law comprehends three movements, which Schelling terms powers, or as we will term them, for distinction's sake, *potencies*. The first is the reflective movement (*Potenz der Reflexion*); this answers to the negative or expansive force, and viewed philosophically is the attempt of the Infinite to embody or represent itself in the Finite. The second movement is that of subsumption (*Potenz der Subsumption*), which is the attempt that the absolute makes, having embodied itself in the Finite, to return to the Infinite. The third movement is simply the union or indifference point of the two former, which Schelling terms the potency of reason (*Potenz der Vernunft*), as being that in

¹ "If all knowledge has two poles, which suppose each other, and require each other mutually; these two poles ought to be looked for in all the sciences. There ought to be, therefore, two fundamental sciences; and in starting from one of the poles it is impossible to fail of the other. The necessary tendency, therefore, of the science of nature, is, starting from nature to arrive at the sphere of intelligence. The continued efforts which are made in all the sciences to attach the phenomena of nature to a theory, reveal this tendency in a striking manner."—Syst. des Transcend. Ideal. Introd. Sec. 1.

which the expansive and attractive, the subjective and objective movements are blended.¹

Having thus prepared the way, we can now give a regular and connected sketch of Schelling's "Philosophy of Identity," as it was developed in his earlier writings.

The foundation-stone upon which the whole rests is the absolute and infinite existence (*Seyn*), which forms of itself the whole real essence of the universe, and to the consciousness of which we attain by means of intellectual intuition. This infinite *Being*, containing everything in itself potentially which it can afterwards become actually, strives by the law which we have above indicated after self-development. By the first movement (the potency of reflection) it embodies its own infinite attributes in the Finite. In doing this, it produces finite objects, *i. e.* Finite reflections of itself, and thus sees itself objectified in the forms and productions of the material world. This first movement then gives rise to the *philosophy of nature*. The second movement (potency of subsumption) is the regress of the Finite into the Infinite; it is nature, as above constituted, again making itself absolute, and re-assuming the form of the Eternal. The result of this movement is *mind*, as existing in man, which is nothing else than nature gradually raised to a state of consciousness, and attempting in that way

¹ A view of this law of the absolute is given in the "Ideen zu einer Phil. der Natur, and Erster Entwurf;" but more fully in the "Neue Zeitschrift für Spec. Phil." St. II. p. 46, &c.

to return to its infinite form. This gives rise to transcendental idealism, the philosophy of *mind*. The combination of these two movements (Potenz der Vernunft) is the reunion of the subject and object in divine reason ; it is God, not in his original or potential, but in his unfolded and realized existence, forming the whole universe of mind and Being. This is the proper view of Schelling's pantheism, and is fully unfolded in the philosophy of the absolute.

Having thus seen the absolute dividing itself into object and subject, nature, and spirit, by the original laws of all being, we shall go onwards with these two branches of philosophy, and follow Schelling step by step in the construction of his whole system. That system all turns upon the law or rhythm we have explained.

Just in the same manner as we perceived three potencies in the absolute itself, so also shall we find three potencies in each of the two divisions of philosophy, which have thus originated, namely, in *nature* and in *mind*. These three potencies will again form three subordinate spheres of being, each of which still continues to exhibit the same law, showing two opposite movements and a point of indifference in which they both unite. Schelling terms the movements which come within the philosophy of nature the *real* side of the question, those which come within the philosophy of spirit the *ideal*, both absolutely answering to each other, but the one in the lower state of unconscious existence,

the other in the more highly developed state of self-consciousness. Nature and spirit are thus both the emanations of the eternal mind, but the one in a higher potency than the other. To make the matter clear to the eye, and at the same time to furnish an index to our subsequent explanation, we shall here give the outlines of the whole system in the following scheme.¹

¹ It should be observed that Schelling has not given any synoptic view of his philosophy as here presented. The annexed scheme is in fact constructed from a general view of all his works combined, and comprehends equally the Natur-philosophie and the Transcendentaler Idealismus, placing them together so as to form an organic whole. For the general idea of the plan, I am indebted to the work of J. L. Schwartz, "Schelling's Alte und Neue Philosophie."

The Absolute in its undeveloped essence divides itself into

OBJECT, OR THE REAL SIDE,

AND

SUBJECT, OR THE IDEAL SIDE.

First Sphere, (that of matter,) containing,

Potence of Reflection=Expansion.

Potence of Subsumption=Attraction.

Potence of Reason=Gravity.

1ST. INDIFFERENCE.

Second Sphere, (that of Dynamics,) containing,

Potence of Reflection=Magnetism.

Potence of Subsumption=Electricity.

Potence of Reason=Galvanism.

2D. INDIFFERENCE.

Third Sphere, (that of Organism,) also, union of other two Spheres,

containing

Potence of Reflection=Reproduction.

Potence of Subsumption=Irritability.

Potence of Reason=Sensibility.

3D. INDIFFERENCE.

First Sphere, (that of Knowing,) containing,

Potence of Reflection=Feeling.

Potence of Subsumption=Reflection.

Potence of Reason=Freedom.

1ST. INDIFFERENCE.

Second Sphere, (that of Action,) containing,

Potence of Reflection=Individuality.

Potence of Subsumption=State.

Potence of Reason=History.

2D. INDIFFERENCE.

Third Sphere, (that of art, as seen in the productions of genius.)

This, as the absolute indifference of all the other Spheres, is the highest point of man's development; it has no separate potencies, but leads us to the final result of the whole system,—viz:

The Absolute in its developed state, being the identity of Nature and Spirit, of the Real and Ideal.

Now, in directing our attention first to the *real* side of the above plan, the development of which gives us the philosophy of nature, we must remember that external nature, according to Schelling, contains the absolute essence *complete*, only viewed predominantly from an objective point of view.

First sphere.—The first sphere, that of *matter* mechanically considered, is the streaming forth of the infinite into the finite ; it is the development of the productive *power* of nature into some actual product ; the union of the infinite essence with finite form. Matter is the production of, or rather emanation from, the great eternal *mind* ; it is strictly speaking, that mind itself seen in its primary reflective movement, and making itself finite in order to become the object of its own happy contemplation. God saw all he had made—all that came forth from himself, the type of his own power and glory, and behold it was very good.

Matter, however, as being a complete exhibition of the Absolute in one particular aspect, and as forming a universe in itself, must exhibit all the three potencies above indicated. The first of these is repulsion, or the expansive power ; the next is attraction, or that by which the expansive or objective tendency is limited, and referred back to the centre from which it sprung. Just as by their centrifugal force the planets individualise themselves in their own separate orbits, and by their centripetal all tend back to one centre, so matter in general by repulsion is individualised, and by attraction tends back again to unity. The indifference of these two forces

is *gravity*, that which makes matter what it is, and gives it the appearance of being the dull, lifeless, impenetrable mass which we ordinarily conceive it to be in things around us. The first generic potency, then, of nature, is the union of the repulsive and attractive forces, forming the whole phenomena of the material universe, *statically* considered.¹

Second sphere. This being the reflective movement of the real side, as above shown, we now look for the second generic potency, that of subsumption, by which the material world will exhibit a regress movement back from its finite forms towards infinity. This second potency is the principle of *light*. Light is the soul, of which matter is the body; it is that by which nature gazes upon itself. Nature, accordingly, when viewed in this potency, is no longer seen as dull inert matter, but as replete with perpetual movement and activity. This dynamical sphere of nature's operations, has likewise three movements. The first is *magnetism*, in which the motive power is seen, by means of polarity, dividing itself into two opposite directions, and always acting

¹ "Erster Entwurf," Introduction, p. 57, *et seq.* In his treatise, "Von der Welt-seele," p. 47, Schelling explains his theory of matter thus. "The heterogeneity of matter loses itself at length in the idea of an original homogeneity of all the positive principles in the world. Even that original opposition, which *appears* to maintain the dualism of nature, vanishes in this idea. We cannot explain the chief phenomena of nature without such a conflict of opposing principles. But this conflict only exists in the moment of appearing. Each power of nature originates that which is opposed to it. This does not exist *of itself*, but only in the conflict, and it is simply this conflict which gives it a momentary separate existence. So soon as the conflict ceases, it vanishes, inasmuch as it steps back into the sphere of universal identity."

in a right line. The second is *electricity*, which shows again the unity of the positive and negative poles of the magnet, and acts over surfaces. The third is the chemical process, or galvanism, which is the combination of these two forces, and gives the third dimension to space.¹ From the two foregoing spheres—that of matter, and that of light—of statics, and dynamics, the existence of the three realms of nature is explained. Hard unyielding matter is the kingdom in which *weight*, or gravity, is predominant—that in which movement predominates is the air, and the indifference of these is water.

Third sphere. Having thus seen nature in its first potency, as attraction and repulsion, giving rise to the phenomena of mechanical matter;—having seen it also in its second, or dynamical potency, taking the appearance of light, in the forms of magnetism, electricity, and galvanism, we now come to the third potency, that in which the two former are perfectly combined, and in which is shown the whole working of the Absolute towards its great end, in a finite form. There is one great aim after self-development in all nature; but as in the real or objective side the Absolute is seen individualised, the aim of nature must there result in individual productions, each of which is a little world (a microcosm) in itself. This is realised in organisation, or life; in which matter and light, the

¹ Schelling's theory of the Dynamical principles of nature, more especially the method by which he deduces the three dimensions of space from magnetism, electricity, and galvanism respectively, is best seen in the "Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik," Vol. ii. part 2. See also Schwartz, p. 54, *et seq.*

maternal and paternal principle, the mechanical and dynamical potencies, are perfectly combined. Every organisation is the complete representation or image of the Absolute in a finite form; it is subject-object exhibited in nature; and constitutes the highest perfection of physical existence. The three movements of this sphere are, first, reproduction—the embodying of the essential life-principle into new forms; secondly, irritability—the power of independent and unimpelled movement; and thirdly, sensibility, in which the reproductive and self-moving principles are combined. Here we have followed nature in its different objective spheres, up to its highest development; sensibility forming the point in which mere organized life ends, and spiritual life begins.¹

In giving this rapid sketch of Schelling's philosophy of nature, we have concentrated in a few pages the matter of some two or three volumes. To show how the different processes are deduced one from the other—how in the first sphere the principles of mechanics are developed; how in the second the phenomena of chemical agents are elucidated; how in the third the progress of organized life is traced, from the lowest kind of plant, through all the varieties of vegetable and animal existence to the very highest organisation, would take more space than can be here allotted to

¹ Schelling's theory of organised matter is expounded in various of his works—*e. g.* "Erster Entwurf," Introduction; "Zeitschrift für Spec. Phys." vol. ii. part 2; "Von der Welt-seele;" "Ueber den Ursprung des allgemeinen Organismus," p. 179, &c.

the subject. We have been anxious to give the *principles*, upon which the whole system proceeds, as clearly as possible, and must refer the student, who would understand it more fully, to the works of Schelling himself, or to the numerous analyses which exist of his philosophy in the German language.

We have followed nature, then, through the successive potencies, in which it appears as matter, light, life. All these unconscious productions are but unsuccessful attempts in nature to raise itself to intelligence; they are exhibitions of mind, as yet in a state of slumber; and when at length we get beyond them into a higher potency, and pass from philosophy of nature into philosophy of mind, we have to do precisely with the same essence, only in another form; and to view precisely the same processes, only raised to the loftier position of self-consciousness.

Leaving, then, the real or objective side of philosophy, we pass on to the ideal or subjective department—that to which the name of *transcendental idealism* has been appended. This work of Schelling answers very closely to Fichte's "Wissenschaftslehre." Like Fichte, he begins by searching after an absolute principle of knowledge, and finds it in the same formula $A = A$.¹ Like Fichte, he divides the whole investigation into the theoretical and the practical aspects of the question. Like Fichte, he proceeds by merging the contradictions which the objective and subjective views originate, in higher and more universal principles, until the whole is reduced, not as

¹ Transcend. Ideal. Part I. sec. 1.

with Fichte, to the absolute spontaneity of the me, but to the absolute spontaneity of the universal soul.¹ What has before appeared under the form of contraction and expansion—of time and space—now appears under the subjective type of subject and object; the two opposite elements out of which all our knowledge is generated.² We proceed, therefore, with the development of our scheme, as shown on the ideal side of the philosophy of identity.

Mind, as we said, is the second movement of the universal law by which the absolute unfolds itself; it is nature returning from the Finite, in which it had embodied itself, back again to the Infinite; and just as we saw, that on the real side there were three movements of objective nature, so, on the ideal side, we find answering to them three movements of subjective mind. The first sphere is that of *knowledge*, and this corresponds to matter in the objective side, inasmuch as the laws of perception and of thought exactly answer to the real productions of nature, as was already shown to some extent by Kant, and more clearly by Fichte. The second sphere corresponding to the dynamics of nature, is that of *practice*, or mind in its *free activity*. And, lastly, the third sphere in which knowledge and practice are combined, is that of *art*, which exactly answers to the organic power of nature. This affords us three divisions in the science of mind,—the philosophy of intelligence, philosophy of practice, and philosophy

¹ Transcend. Ideal. Part vi. General Observations.

² Ibid. Introd. sec. 2.

of art; the contents of which we shall now portray.¹

First sphere. The philosophy of intelligence, being the first or theoretical sphere of the subjective development of the Absolute, must bear upon it the characteristic feature of the first potency, namely, the embodying of the infinite in the finite. In other words, mind, (or the me,) in coming to the distinct knowledge of anything, must have its free activity limited, and this limitation, (or obstacle, as Fichte termed it,) which gives us the idea of an actual objective product, is the infinite activity of the subject in the process of constituting itself *finite*.

In this sphere, again, we shall have three movements as before. The first is *sensation*, in which the mind's activity gives rise to a distinct image, that is placed before it as object of its own contemplation. The second movement is *reflection*, in which the mind is no longer sunk in the contemplation of its own production objectively viewed, but becomes aware of the *process* by which the consciousness of the moment is produced. The result of this self-conscious process is called a Notion (Begriff), and the process itself is termed Judgment (Urtheil). Judgment is the reference of a particular to a general (as we see, *e. g.* in the proposition, *horse is an animal*;) and in it, therefore, the finite perception, which we attained to in sensation, is carried back again to the infinite

¹ Transcend. Ideal. Introd. sec. 3.

essence (the category) to which it belongs. The union of sensation and reflection gives rise to *freedom*, which is the third movement; for by means of reflection, we become conscious that sensations, though apparently constrained, are the products of our own activity.¹

Second sphere.—The idea of freedom brings us to the second sphere of the subjective side, namely, the philosophy of *practice*. Under the former sphere we have the analysis of the intellectual powers, under this the principles of action; and, as in knowledge, the *Me* was seen to be limited, throwing itself into a finite product, so now in action it essays to rise again to the Infinite; for in all moral action Deity itself, in its essential qualities, is manifested. Knowledge shows the essence of the Absolute expressed in a form; action shows the form again returning to the essence. In practical philosophy, as in all the other spheres, we still have three movements. The first is, that in which the active intelligence shows itself operating within a limited circuit, as in a single mind. This is the principle of individuality; not as though the infinite intelligence were something different from the finite, or as though there were an infinite intelligence out of and apart from the finite, but it is merely the absolute in one of its particular moments; just as an individual thought is but a single moment

¹ Transcend. Ideal. Part iii., in which the successive steps of theoretical intelligence are developed at length, in the order above indicated.

of the whole mind. Each finite reason, then, is but a *thought* of the infinite and eternal reason. Under this head of individuality, Schelling explains all the phenomena connected with volition and personality, deducing the nature of the passions, impulses, and moral feelings, all of which appear before us as springs to our individual action.¹

The second movement in this sphere, is that in which the individualised action of the absolute seeks to generalise itself; in which man no longer acts alone as an individual, but, in combination with other men, forming a *state*. Hence arises the philosophy of jurisprudence and political economy. Now, as men, when acting individually, act under the influence of freedom, so in their political combinations they act from necessity. A country is urged forward in its progress towards civilisation, not by any distinct volitions of its own, but by a necessary law of development. Every nation plays its part in the drama of the world, and every one performs its *proper* mission, but it marches on to its destiny, not with design, but by some unknown yet necessary cause.²

This leads us, accordingly, to the third movement, in which freedom and necessity are completely blended, and that is *history*. History is the absolute combination of the freedom of the individual

¹ Transcend. Ideal. Part iv. prop. 1 and 2, in which the spontaneity of The-Me is exhibited as the principle of human *freedom*.

² Ibid. Part iv. prop. 4, in which it is shown how in the state the human will becomes objective to itself.

with the necessary development of the race. Every act of which history is composed is a free act; and yet man, with all his freedom, cannot help contributing to the accomplishment of the destiny of the whole nation and the whole race to which he belongs. History is thus the great mirror, from which the soul of the world is reflected; it is an ever unfolding epic of the Divine intelligence; and in it we see how the one eternal mind, which operates in us all, reveals itself successively to view through the medium of our individual freedom.

In history Schelling lays down three great periods. The first was the period of *fate*, when everything appeared absolutely under the influence of a blind and irresistible power. This may be termed the tragic age. The second period is that in which the power of fate reveals itself as a *law of nature*, that coerces everything into a certain plan of development, which it is compelled to subserve. This period commences with the extension of the Roman empire, from which age we can trace the elements that have moulded our modern history down to the present time. The third period will be that in which we no longer speak of fate, nor of the laws of nature, but where we view the whole as a *divine revelation* upon the theatre of the world. This will be the age of Providence.¹

Third sphere.—Having now considered the two former potencies of the subjective development of the absolute; having seen it first in the sphere of

¹ Transcend. Ideal. Part iv. prop. 4. sol. 3.

knowledge, causing its activity to assume the appearance of an image or notion, its essence to clothe itself in a finite form; having seen it, secondly, in the sphere of practice, returning to its original mode of existence as a boundless activity or absolute law; we now come to the highest potency of mental existence, that of genius, as seen in the production of *art*. In this we find the complete concentration of all that has gone before, whether in the real or the ideal side of our philosophy.

Art, as the union of the two former spheres of the ideal philosophy, must contain in it a blending together both of knowledge and of action, of form and of essence; and this is precisely its great characteristic. Theory and practice are there completely united. Freedom and necessity, which we saw working in the other spheres separately, in this higher sphere work together; for the artist is impelled by an inward inspiration to his labour. Moreover, art being the highest point of the actual development of the absolute, as it rises from the lowest forms of matter to the highest intelligence, must unite in itself both the subjective and the objective: and what, in fact, are the productions of genius but the embodying our ideal creations into actual objective forms? Again, art must show the features both of the finite and the infinite; and accordingly, infinite perfection, the beau-ideal of beauty and sublimity, is shadowed forth by the artist in his own finite productions. Lastly, as nature and mind show the two characteristics, the

one of unconsciousness, the other of self-consciousness, so the inspirations of genius are partly conscious and partly spontaneous. And thus the infinite mind having passed through its various forms of objective and unconscious development, as seen in matter, light, and organisation, attains to its state of self-consciousness in sensation, reflection, and freedom, and is carried by the practical movement to the highest point of self-realisation, where by means of art its subjective or ideal forms become objectified. Here, then, we have the unity or indifference of the real and the ideal, and come, at length, at the end of the process, to a self-produced, or rather a self-developed, *subject-object*.¹

Having completed the two poles of his Identitätslehre, Schelling next proposed to show the indifference point itself; that is, to furnish the philosophy of the absolute by an analysis of the *pure reason*. This was commenced, as we before remarked, in the "Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik," but not completed. The Hegelians assert that it could not be completed on Schelling's principles, but that the subjective and objective philosophies respectively of Fichte and Schelling, are united and integrated, only by the dialectic process of Hegel.

The above sketch, however brief and imperfect, may perhaps suffice to give an idea of the general

¹ Transcend. Ideal., Pt. vi. In this last part the principles of Transcendental Idealism are brought up to their highest point of development. All the rays of Schelling's philosophy meet in the idea of *genius* as in a focus. This it is which links the human to the Divine.

character of Schelling's original philosophy. The sensation it produced was manifest throughout Germany, and many of the rising philosophers of the day entered eagerly into a system at once so comprehensive and so poetical. Many of Schelling's pupils aided him in the journal which he published as the organ of his views, and some of them exerted a reflex influence upon the master himself, leading him to recast some of his opinions and to expand others. By the time his system as above described was completed, Schelling began to perceive that he had elaborated too much the objective points in his philosophy; and that in the intense view which he had taken of the absolute, he had diminished, nay, almost lost sight of the notion of any finite existence possessing freedom and personality. With him the absolute essence had become everything; and its development was not the free and designed operation of intelligence, but rather a blind impulse working, first unconsciously in nature, and only coming to self-consciousness in mind. On this principle, all difference between God and the universe was entirely lost; his pantheism became as complete as that of Spinoza; and as the absolute was evolved from its lowest forms to the highest, in accordance with the necessary law or rhythm of its being, the whole world, material and mental, became one enormous chain of necessity, to which no idea of free creation could by any possibility be attached.

Accordingly he now began to enter upon another

course of philosophy, not intended to contradict the former, but rather to perfect it, by placing the whole question in a new light. Many different treatises were published by him one after the other, before he appeared to have written himself clear as to what his real design was; but at length he came forth with the declaration, that there are two kinds of philosophy, the *positive* and the *negative*; that he had supplied the negative side, in his original system; and that he was now about to complete it, by supplying the positive. The difference between the two, according to Schelling, consists in this, that while the negative philosophy deduces the *idea* (Begriff) of God *as an idea*, the positive supplies his real essential existence. The positive philosophy starts from being, and comes to thought; the negative starts from thought, and seeks (though in vain) to attain to existence.¹

God, the object of all philosophy, stands to us in two points of view. On the one hand, there is the abstract idea of him, *i. e.* the notion of his attributes, or of *what* he is; on the other hand, there is his being or existence, embodying the truth *that* he

¹ The first distinct statement of this new stand-point is found in the "Jahrbücher der Medicin," vol. i. part i. The precise reason why the terms positive and negative are applied to the two aspects of his system, it is not very easy to determine. The prevailing idea, however, seems to be that in the negative philosophy, he started (as Fichte did) from an absolute and rational principle of science, and thus evolved only the order of *ideas*: in the positive, on the contrary, he begins with the direct intuition of Deity, as matter of inward experience, and thus gets into the sphere of *reality*.—Consult preface to Cousin's Fragments, on the *method* of philosophy.

is. The negative philosophy begins with a low and crude idea of the absolute, and evolves from it a higher; in this way it proceeds step by step through all the realms of nature and spirit, until it attains the highest *notion* which we can have of Deity; but when it has done all this, it is only the notion of God we have deduced, and not the *existence*. The positive philosophy, then, adds to this idea of God his real existence; much in the same way as in Kant's system we saw that his theoretical philosophy attained a notion of God which appeared simply as a personification of our own faculties, while his practical philosophy, on the other hand, supplied the essential reality.¹

The chief objects, then, of this new or positive philosophy may be stated as follows:—1st. To raise us beyond the pantheistic view, given in the former system, and exhibit the Deity as a free personal supra-mundane being. 2dly. To show the necessity and the process of the creation of the world out of God. 3dly. To explain the relation of man to God, as an independent and yet dependent being. 4thly, and lastly, To unfold the nature and possibility of moral evil. Let us view these four points in succession.

1. In order to rise above the pantheistic point of view, we must distinguish between *the Absolute*, as

¹ This theosophic view Schelling derived in great measure from Jacob Böhme. "Ich schäme mich," he remarks, "des Namens vieler sogenannter Schwärmer nicht, sondern will ihn noch laut bekennen, und mich rühmen von ihnen gelernt zu haben."—"Darlegung des Wahren Verhält." p. 156.

ground of all things, and *Godhead*, as one particular manifestation of it. The primary form of the Absolute is *will* or *self-action*. It is an absolute power of becoming in reality what it is in the germ. The second form in which it appears is that of *being*; *i. e.* the realisation of what its will or power indicated to be possible. But as yet there is no personality, no Deity properly so called. For this we must add the further idea of freedom, which is the power that the Absolute possesses of remaining either in its first or its second potency, as above stated. *In this unity, which contains the three ideas of action, of existence, and of freedom, consists the proper idea of God.* God, before the existence of the world, is the undeveloped, impersonal, absolute essence, from which all things proceed; it is only *after* this essence is developed, and has passed successively into the three states respectively of action, of objective existence, and of freedom, that he attains personality, and answers to the proper notion of Deity.¹

2. With regard to creation, we can now explain the existence of the world without identifying it

¹ The theosophic view of the Divine nature as given by Schelling, is confessedly obscure. In his "Denkmal der Schrift von den göttlichen Dingen," he discusses the question at issue between himself and Jacobi; and seeks to vindicate himself from the charge of pantheism. So also in the Preface to Cousin, he combats the notion, that Deity is synonymous with pure being, as involving a pantheistic result; and shows the chief merit of his philosophy to arise from the fact of its having established the idea of a progressive development in the Absolute, from pure being up to personality.—Preface, part iii.

with Deity, as is done in the ordinary pantheistic hypothesis. The absolute is the real ground of all things that exist, but the absolute is not yet Deity. That element in it, which passes into the creation and constitutes its essence, is not the whole essence of Deity ; it is not that part of it which, peculiarly speaking, makes it divine. The material world, then, is simply one form or potency in which the absolute chooses to exist ; in which it freely determines to objectify itself, and consequently is only one step towards the realisation of the full conception of Deity, as a Divine Person.¹

3. Man is the summit of the creation—he is that part of it in which the absolute sees himself most fully portrayed as the perfect image or type of the infinite reason. In him, objective creation has taken the form of subjectivity ; and hence he is said, in contradistinction to every thing else, to have been formed *in the image of God*.

Lastly. To solve the problem of moral evil, we must keep in mind, that man, though grounded in the absolute, still is not identified with Deity ; since the Divine element, namely, the unity of the three potencies of the original essence, is wanting to him. Still, man bears a perfect resemblance to God, and therefore must be *free*, and fully capable of acting, if he choose, against his own destiny. This actually

¹ This theosophic view of nature is given at large in the “Jahrbücher der Medicin.” The student of Schelling, however, may see the whole of what is essential to the matter, in the small polemical brochure, entitled, “Darlegung des wahren Verhältnisses der Natur-philosophie zu der verbesserten Fichtischen Lehre.” (1806.)

took place, inasmuch as he attempted, like God, *to create*, separating the three potencies, which were shadowed forth in him as the image of Deity, and not being able in doing so to retain their unity. Hence the will of man was removed from the centre of the Divine will, attempted to act independently, and brought confusion and moral obliquity into his nature. Man would become like a God, and by attempting to do so, he lost the very image of God which he did possess.¹

The last attempts which Schelling has made in philosophy have been almost entirely of a theosophic, and, consequently, mystical nature. These may all be included under the title, "Philosophy of Revelation," in which he attempts to explain the rationale of all mythology, and to deduce scientifically the whole doctrine of the Bible concerning the fall of man, and his redemption by Christ. In this portion of his philosophy, the doctrine of the Trinity is explained, on the principle of the three divine potencies, which have been so often employed before: the fall of man is interpreted as being the disuniting of the human will as the type, from the Divine will as the antitype; while the doctrine of redemption is viewed as the reunion of that will to God. The first Adam, the original type of humanity, separated from God, and acted during the

¹ The doctrine of human freedom, the nature of good and evil, and the ground of the existence of the latter, are discussed at some length in a tractate at the end of his "Philosophische Schriften," entitled "Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit."

ages of unresisted evil as the god of this world, striving after an independent and extra-Divine existence. The second Adam, on the other hand, the type of the new creation, exhibited the return of man to a perfect union with the Divine nature.¹

On this principle is explained the whole religious history of the world; that history showing, like everything else, three different phases. From the fall of man to the coming of Christ, the human consciousness was given up to the influence of the powers of nature, being separated from God and devoted to sense. Hence the rise of Polytheism, and the existence of heathen mythology generally. Gradually the identity of these powers with God began to break in upon the mind, and gave the first notion of monotheism, which was completed in Christ, the God-Man. Christ represented the complete reunion of man to God, the return of the finite revolted will to the infinite—a return which is shadowed forth by his perfect obedience. But man is not raised at once to perfect reunion to God; and hence the dispensation of the spirit, as that in which the reunion is completed by the constant impulse of a Divine power.²

¹ Schelling's views on the philosophy of revelation are only known in their more matured form, as delivered in the lecture room. Some idea of them, however, may be gained from his "*Philosophie und Religion*," and also from the "*Lectures on the methods of Academical Study*." The eighth lecture is on the Historical Construction of Christianity, where a general view is afforded of the manner in which he understands the nature of the Christian doctrines.

² This historical view of mankind from the religious stand-point is given in the tractate "*Ueber die Gottheiten der Samothrace*."

Even in the development of Christianity itself, Schelling finds the same threefold movement which runs so universally through his whole system. The first movement is seen in the Catholic Church, the religion of Peter, objective in its whole aspect ; the second in Protestantism, the religion of Paul, appealing to man's subjective consciousness ; the third is the religion of John—the union of both in love. The first and second are now passing away, and the next great form of Christianity will be that in which love will conquer all in the perfect union of the objective religion of the Catholic, with the subjective piety of the Protestant.¹

It is now easy to see the vast comprehensiveness of Schelling's philosophy *as a whole*. It begins by advocating a kind of Divine intuition, by which we gaze upon the realistic *ground or basis* of all the phenomena, both of mind and matter. From this it goes on to construct, by means of an absolute and *a priori* law, the whole phenomenal universe, deriving it from the self-unfolding of the Absolute. One region of existence after another yields, as by a magic spell, to the bidding of this law, and confesses its secret unveiled. Matter, with all its dull

¹ In 1841, Schelling opened his lectures at Berlin, and excited the hope that the long expected completion of his Philosophy would be accomplished. His speedy retirement, however, rendered this hope delusive. The only thing that has come from his pen since that time is a preface to the posthumous works of Steffens. (1846). This, however, is almost entirely occupied with remarks upon the religious aspect of the times, and the "church of the future."

inertia, puts on the garb of contending powers, and shows itself to be the objective reflection of the Absolute itself; those subtle agencies which we term magnetism, electricity, galvanism, light, and heat, each owns itself to be but one pulsation in the self-developing process of the universal mind; and even the phenomena of organised life are still but the complete objectifying of the absolute, each animal nature being a perfected type of the eternal nature itself. From the philosophy of nature, Schelling passes in one unbroken chain of argument, without a chasm between, to the philosophy of spirit. The same great law of the absolute solves the mysteries of sensation, of intelligence, and of human freedom; from thence it proceeds to explain the phenomena of man as an individual agent; of man in his connexion with society; and, lastly, of man as he has developed his being upon the broad page of history. Finally, it enters into the mazy regions of human genius and art, and finds in them the crown and the summit of the whole process—the highest expression of the Deity in the world.

Here it might be supposed, that the author would have found his goal, and having constructed the universe out of almost nothing, have at length enjoyed his Sabbath in peace. But, instead of this, we find that the work is only half done; he has developed the *law* of the universe, but not explained the *substance*; he has exhibited the *form*, now he must go to the matter; he has analysed the full

idea of God, and now he must make manifest his *existence*. Upon this, with unwearied wings, he begins another flight—pantheism is left behind, and the real Triune Jehovah is placed before us in all the plenitude of a Divine personality. Next, the whole nature of the dependent creation is developed, the procedure of the material universe from the absolute expounded, and the mysteries of existence, which had been hidden before in thick darkness, made irradiant with light and intelligence. The destiny of man then comes upon the stage. To show this, we have the origin of moral evil discussed; and the question, so long tossed upon the billows of controversy, for ever set at rest. The door being thus open into the region of Christian theology, the philosopher boldly enters in, to grapple with the great ideas which we there meet with. The law, which has unveiled the mysteries of nature and the soul, we may be sure does not fail in explaining the whole rationale of Christian faith. The great doctrines of revelation—the fall of man—the theory of redemption—the effusion of the Spirit,—all are converted from objects of faith to objects of science; all flow, as by natural consequence, from the great rhythm of existence; nay, the controversies of the Church themselves are settled, and the repose of the world announced in the predominance of the doctrines of the beloved apostle over the equally partial views, both of the Protestant and the Catholic. Such, and far more sweeping than we have represented it, is the philosophical system by which the

name of Schelling is destined to go down the stream of time to the latest posterity.

To give any elaborate critique upon Schelling's philosophy, we imagine is in this country quite unnecessary, inasmuch as it would be arguing about a system, which very few as yet understand, and perhaps no one believes in. We shall only offer one or two reflections upon some of the main positions which almost necessarily suggest themselves. First of all, where is our guarantee for the validity of the intellectual-intuition principle, upon which the whole truth of the system rests, and without which, as Schelling acknowledges, no one can take one single step into his philosophy? Respecting our knowledge of the Absolute, there are in fact no less than three hypotheses in vogue. The first is, that the knowledge of it is altogether impossible, there being no higher faculty than the understanding, and that being cognisant simply of relative and finite phenomena. The next hypothesis maintains, that we have a faculty superior to the understanding, namely, the reason; by which we gain an idea of the absolute as the primary existence in which all finite things are grounded. The third hypothesis is, that of intellectual intuition, by which, as Schelling imagines, we are not only cognisant of the absolute, but have an insight also into the very laws of its development in creation.

Now Schelling fully admits that the Absolute cannot be known by our ordinary intellectual faculties; in other words, that the actual essence of

things cannot be attained to simply by our *understanding*. Instead of contenting himself, however, with the faculty of *reason*, as the revealer of absolute existence, he has ventured to run into an altogether wild hypothesis, and under the fiction of intellectual intuition, has pretended to unfold, *a priori*, all the secrets of nature, as being various modi of the Divine existence; in a word, to reproduce in our own consciousness Deity itself. We cannot but think that Schelling has far too gratuitously taken for granted, both the reality of the process, which he terms intellectual intuition, and the reality of the product; especially as he professes to erect a scientific system, having self-evident axioms at its basis. If his doctrine of identity means anything, it means that thought and being are essentially one; that the process of thinking is virtually the same as the process of creating; that in constructing the universe by logical deduction, we do virtually the same thing as Deity accomplishes in developing himself into all the forms and regions of creation; that every man's reason, therefore, is really God: in fine, that Deity is the whole sum of consciousness immanent in the world. "This doctrine," says M. Willm, in his Memoir to the French Academy, "is founded—

"1. Upon an illusion. For it takes the process of ordinary generalisation for an absolute law of reason; and erects the principle at which generalisation stops, into the real and essential principle of things themselves.

"2. Upon a paralogism. For it confounds the order of knowledge with the order of existence.

"3. Upon an exaggeration. For it exaggerates the harmony which exists, or which we naturally affirm between our intelligence and reality, by making it an *identity*, and attributing to reason so absolute an authority, that every thing must be as it thinks, from the moment that it thinks it.

"4. Upon an hypothesis. For it is a gratuitous supposition to place all truth in the reason, and thus to equal reason with God."¹

To be convinced that Schelling's axioms are not the soundest, we have only to look next to some of the actual conclusions of his philosophy, and consider whether they be not in the highest degree unsatisfactory. As an example of this, we imagine, that his original system of identity, which makes the whole phenomena of the universe one chain of necessary development, is entirely inconsistent with the facts of physical and moral evil; and equally so with the conscious freedom of man as a moral agent. Again; the view maintained by Schelling respecting Deity, as coming gradually to self-consciousness, and realising himself only in man, is utterly inconsistent with the perfections of God, as displayed in the design of the universe, and felt in the holier emotions of man's religious nature. Further; the result of the system, as a theory of natural philosophy, by no means answers to the expectations it

¹ Rémusat "De la Philosophie Allemande," p. 127.

excites. One would think, that if the very laws of material existence were laid bare, there could be no further need of experimental investigations. What then is the fact?—within the bounds of experimental philosophy not an idea is introduced, which can bear any other title than that of pure hypothesis; while the *rough* path of induction must still be beaten as diligently, as though Schelling's great *a priori* discoveries had never dawned upon the world. If we *are* to have a purely rational philosophy at all, which shall satisfy the phenomena of the universe, and explain the whole experience of the human consciousness, it must rest upon a far surer foundation than that which Schelling has laid, and answer far more perfectly to the external and internal facts, which come before our daily observation. The day, we imagine, is far distant, before we shall have to welcome the development of any great physical laws from one who entirely sets at naught the whole logic of induction.

With regard to Schelling's Theosophy, we can hardly view it as meriting the title of philosophy at all, in any true or proper sense; indeed, we believe it is very generally rejected in Germany, even by those who had been warm admirers of his original system. With these obvious objections, however, we must admit, that, as an instance of bold generalisation, of fertile fancy, of reasoning ingenuity, abounding at the same time in original views on many topics, and exhibiting a most extensive acquaintance with almost every branch of human

knowledge, the philosophy of Schelling exhibits a monument of genius, which, in the same department, has been seldom equalled, and perhaps never exceeded, in the world.¹

Fichte and Schelling represent the two opposite sides of the modern German idealism; the one starting from the subjective principle, the other from the objective—the one regarding self, the other the infinite and eternal mind, the soul of the world, as the Absolute. HEGEL, to whom we must now turn our attention, has passed beyond the region both of the one and the other, and attained to the elevation of what is usually termed *absolute idealism*. Fichte supposed that there is a real subjective existence, in whose nature reside those limitations, by which he has accounted for the phenomena of the outward world; and Schelling maintained an original, absolute, living *essence*, containing within itself the laws of its own self-development. Hegel has first resolved everything into a *process* of thought, and claimed to reach the point at which all speculative philosophy aims—that in which thought and existence perfectly coincide.

George William Frederick Hegel was born at Stuttgard, in the year 1770. At the age of seventeen he went to the university of Tübingen, where he devoted himself to the study of theology, and, in the philosophical department, attended the same lectures with Schelling. After having taken his

¹ See Note G. Appendix.

degree, and having occupied some years as a private tutor, he went to Jena in the year 1801, where he began his lectures as a professor, with an auditory of *four* students. The next sixteen years of his life were spent, partly as a professor, partly as rector of a gymnasium, and partly as an editor and author. At length, in the year 1818, he was called to Berlin, where he lectured with great success till his death, which took place November 14, 1831.

Hegel began his philosophical career as a firm partisan of Schelling; and when he first ventured beyond the pale of his authority, the aim was rather to give system and unity to Schelling's doctrines, than to advance any altogether new ideas. Schelling, as we have sufficiently seen, was anything but systematic in his philosophical writings; in continuing to pour forth the productions of his inventive genius, through the medium of his journals, he seemed to aim more at putting his thoughts in different points of view, than at building up the regular framework of a scientific superstructure. Hegel, with less invention, possessed greater logical acumen and far more method than his contemporary; and to this mainly is owing the great extent to which his school has now spread itself throughout Germany.¹

¹ Hegel himself says in a letter to his friend Van Ghert:—"Das, worauf, bei allem philosophiren, und jetzt mehr als sonst, das Hauptgewicht zu legen ist, ist freilich *die Methode des nothwendigen zusammenhangs*, des Uebergehens einer Form in die Andere."—*Vermischte Schriften*, vol. ii. page 479.

The entrance into philosophy, according to Schelling, was by the door of intellectual intuition, a faculty by which we were supposed to gaze immediately upon the absolute, as we gaze by ordinary sensation upon the forms of the material world. Hegel considered this principle to be unphilosophical, and strove to do away with the necessity of a faculty which might be so easily abused, and would so naturally open the door (as was actually the case) into the regions of mysticism. With this object in view, he sought to construct a *purely logical system*, where there should be no inexplicable phenomena remaining—where no real essence, either subjective or objective, should be admitted, that was not fully sublimated into thought, and that might not form indeed a logical part of the very process of philosophy itself.

With Schelling, there was a primary essence in the absolute, *previous* to its development, and which therefore did not originate in the developing process ; in more technical language, there was an (*x*) which remained to the last unresolved in his philosophy. Instead of beginning with *zero*, and explaining *all* existence, he began with a realistic point—a certain absolute power or law, perceived through the medium of intellectual intuition, and made this the basis of everything else. Beyond the region of thought there lay, as he conceived, the region of real existence, containing in it the principle of its own self-unfolding. With Hegel, however, the case was different : he allowed of no original

essence whatever, which was not identical with thought, and which was not completely worked up into his philosophical process. The *x* was with him entirely resolved ; for, beginning with *nothing*, he showed with logical precision how everything had regularly proceeded from it.

Another point of difference between these two great philosophers lies here. Schelling's *intuition* was of such a nature, that the law of the universe (the process of objectifying and again subjectifying) was learned by *experience*. The rhythm of all existence was supposed by him to be cognisable at the same time by the inward experience of the subjective self, in the outward operations of nature, and likewise in the progressive course of the world's history. Hegel's philosophy, on the contrary, is pure rationalism, from the very first step to the last : it results from resigning oneself entirely to the *laws of thought*, as seen in speculative reasoning, and regards the self-development of that thought as being the true revelation of the Absolute, that is, of God. Thoughts are, with him, the only concrete realities ; and logic, as being a true description of their processes, is at the same time a true description of the laws of the universe. With other philosophers, logic had been merely a formal science ; but although its dignity had been much raised by Kant, as also by Fichte and Schelling, yet it was reserved for Hegel to deny altogether its formal character, to make it a *real* branch of metaphysics, and to admit it as a part of the process by which the whole

universe of things is constructed. Not only (as in the philosophy of Schelling) is the method of logic regarded equally with the phenomena of nature as a manifestation of the Absolute, *but it is a part of the very process in which the absolute itself consists.* With these principles, it is easy to see how significantly the Hegelian philosophy has been denominated a system of *absolute idealism.*

We see here, in fact, the perfect culmination of the idealistic method. Kant admitted a double principle as the basis of his philosophy; the subjective *forms* of the understanding uniting with an empirical element, in order to give rise to real knowledge. Fichte brought the question of realism and idealism to a crisis. Whatever we know of a certainty, he affirmed, must be the act of our own consciousness. Philosophy, therefore, must take its stand upon this one subjective principle, and deduce all knowledge, as a spider spins its web, from the laws of the inward self. Schelling perceived that if we take our stand here, one of two things must follow; either we must admit the *me* to be the absolute generating principle of all things, so that the world is but the shadow projected by its own laws (a result which ends virtually in nihilism), or allowing the two terms of subject and object to have a distinct existence, we fail of a single and absolute basis for human knowledge, and return to the old disputes between the realist, the idealist, and the sceptic. To relieve this difficulty, he affirmed the fundamental unity or identity of subject

and object, regarding them as the two poles of existence—separate in their manifestations, but the one infallibly leading to the other. Schelling, it is known, made several attempts to develop the *unity* of his system, and furnish the philosophy of the absolute, but never fully succeeded. The poles ever persisted in remaining apart, the indifference point being unfound. At this point, Hegel came forward with the assertion that subject and object, thought and existence, are *absolutely one*—and that the only actual reality is that which results from their mutual *relation*. Take any material object as an illustration. Fichte would say, it is a result of my inward activity. Schelling would contend that the outward fact and inward perception are both real, but both the manifestation of the absolute essence in different stages of its development. Hegel says no—the outward thing is nothing, the inward perception is nothing, for neither could exist alone; the only reality is the *relation*, or rather the synthesis of the two, which accordingly shows us, that the essence or nature of being itself consists in the co-existence of two opposites. Accordingly, the ordinary conception which men have formed of things, is completely reversed. We generally consider that an individual object, say a man or a horse, is a *reality*, and that it is the mind which forms the universal idea for its own convenience. Hegel, on the other hand, affirms, that it is the universal and particular ideas, the genus and species put together, which actually create the individual. *Ideas*, there-

fore, arising as they do from the union of two opposites, are the *concrete realities* of Hegel's philosophy; and the process of the evolution of ideas in the human mind is, at the same time, the process of all existence—the Absolute—God. On this ground it is, that logic is the necessary basis of every system of *absolute idealism*.¹

Philosophy begins, then, on the Hegelian principle, by our gaining a clear conception of the laws of thought; those laws by which the knowledge of *anything whatever* is arrived at. In attempting to observe these laws, we soon discover that the process of knowing implies a threefold movement. *First* of all, our consciousness exists in a condition in which it is *one with the object*. Pure sensation, (as is generally admitted) would never give us the knowledge of an external world; all that it affords us is a *bare feeling*; so that the primary step in the attainment of the knowledge of any object, must be the state in which there is a complete blending of subject and object (simple apprehension). *Secondly*, instead of remaining in this state of consciousness, we soon objectify it; sensation becomes perception, and we refer our feeling to some real outward existence as the cause. The faculty by which this separation between subject and object is effected, is the understanding (*Verstand*), answering to judgment in the ordinary division of the scholastic

¹ The student of Hegel may consult, on this point, Dr Ott's work, entitled "Hegel, et la Philosophie Allemande," chap. ii. where many illustrations of the above principles will be found.

logic. The *third* process is that in which our consciousness again returns to complete union with the object, even whilst the object remains before us in all its clearness. In this last movement, we perceive the object *as a product, or process of our own minds*: while, therefore, it is, as an outward reality, destroyed (*aufgehoben*,) yet as a process of our own consciousness it is preserved; or, in the words of the author, the object is *sublatum*, the process is *servatum*. As the former movement was the effect of the understanding, so this is of the reason (*Vernunft*).

In this process, then, which we find to be uniformly followed, when we attain the knowledge of anything, we see the law, or the rhythm of all nature, and all existence. Take any object whatever and ask how it becomes to us a real existing idea or thing (for with Hegel these two are the same). Philosophers ordinarily say, that when we have a perception there is implied the mind or subject that perceives on the one side, and the object which is perceived on the other, the two communicating by some unknown process. The pure subjective idealist, it is true, denies the reality of the object, and regards it as a production of the subject; but Schelling had exploded this notion, and introduced the doctrine of identity, according to which we must admit a real subject and a real object, but must regard them as two corresponding manifestations of the same absolute existence. Hegel, however, now goes one step further in his analysis. He says, that there is

neither subject nor object separately considered, but that they both owe their existence and reality to each other. The only real existence, then, is *the relation*; the whole universe is a universe of relations; subject and object, which appear contradictory to each other, are really one—not one in the sense of Schelling, as being opposite poles of the same absolute existence, but one, inasmuch as their relation forms the very idea, or the very thing itself.

This procedure, then, by which everything comes into being, is the very soul and essence of life, of nature, of the absolute; and Deity, which was in the other systems an original and self-existent reality, is now a *process* or movement ever unfolding itself, but never unfolded. God only realises himself, in fact, in the progress of the human consciousness; and the process by which this realisation is effected, is absolutely synonymous with himself. In a word, the dialectic process is Hegel's method; the dialectic process is his Deity: the dialectic process is every thing: all nature, all mind, all history, all religion, are but pulsations of this movement, and God himself is but the same law taken absolutely in its whole comprehension. In the threefold rhythm of all existence, as given by Hegel, there is a manifest affinity with the three potencies of Schelling; but it was Hegel alone who ventured to make a universe of pure relations, and to raise the process, the very method of his philosophy, to the dignity of being itself the *absolute idea* = God.

With these preliminary observations we must now proceed to look a little closer into the *interior* of the system. The point on which we must stand, in order to take a comprehensive view over the whole range of Hegel's philosophy, is that of the *absolute idea*. The Absolute is with him not the infinite *substance*, as with Spinoza, nor the infinite *subject*, as with Fichte, nor the infinite *mind*, as with Schelling; it is a perpetual *process*, an eternal thinking, without beginning and without end. This process of thought, universally considered, is identical with the logical evolution of ideas in the human mind. The law of evolution may be easily grasped. Let us imagine that we want to develop some idea, and gain the fullest possible conception of it, how do we proceed? We find on reflection that the idea divides itself into two opposites, the one of which is the negation of the other; so that the idea hangs, as it were, in the balance between the two. Here, however, the process does not stop. This negation is itself met by another negation, and thus the idea with which we started is restored, only enriched by the very process we have described. The same process is again repeated; at each turn the idea is evolved to a higher degree; and thus it proceeds onwards until it reaches the absolute idea itself.

Now this law is seen on a vast scale in the whole universe of thought, with which philosophy has to do. Here, as in our own minds, we recognise a threefold movement; that movement expressing the innermost nature of all things. The first step is the

infinite idea in itself (*Idee in sich*). The second is the idea in its objective form, or in its differentiation (*Idee in ihrem anders-seyn*). The third is the idea in its regress. These movements, viewed in connexion with the process of thinking in which the absolute consists, and in which they are perfectly represented, give us, 1st, bare thought (*Denken an sich*), 2dly, thought externalising itself = nature, and, 3dly, thought returning to itself = mind. Accordingly, philosophy has three corresponding divisions; — logic, philosophy of nature, and philosophy of spirit. The first is the region of bare thinking, the second is the region of thought in its objective forms, and the third is the region of thought in its reflective movement in the soul of man.¹ The whole object of philosophy, therefore, is to develop existence from its most empty and abstract form up through logic, nature, and mind, to its highest and richest elevation as attained in the human consciousness. In this we shall find the same process perpetually repeating itself, and gaining something fresh at every pulsation, until it arrives at its highest perfection.² We begin, then, with—

LOGIC.

This is the region of abstract thought, in which

¹ For a brief exhibition of the idea and division of philosophy, the student may consult the introduction to Hegel's "Logic."—N.B. The logic as given in the "Encyclopædie," is shorter and clearer than the original edition. The references accordingly will be given to this.

² Previous to "Logic," Hegel wrote the "Phänomenologie des Geistes." This he used to term his Voyage of Discovery. It is considered the most obscure of his writings.

the absolute appears in its first and most undeveloped form. Logic, as being the province of *Idee an sich*, is intended to show the subjective processes of thought; to point out the method by which, from the most empty of all our notions, we rise gradually to the most rich and full.¹ To explain the true process of logical thinking we must observe, that all knowledge consists in a separation or distinguishing of one thing from another. In every thought there are two parts, which stand opposed; both of which are absolutely necessary to give it a clear and actual meaning. It is the same whether we view thought in the form of sensation, or of perception, or of reflection; in every instance, there must be something separated, defined, distinguished, or placed in opposition to something else. We have no notion, *e. g.*, of a finite without an infinite; no idea of cause without effect; no idea of subjective without objective. So also in nature there could be no north pole without a south, and no idea of material substance without immaterial.

This being the case, it is not possible for any notion to exist as an *absolute unity*: it must, in every instance, consist of two sides, a positive and a negative; and, to complete it, these two sides must be combined so as to form one perfect idea. This is called by Hegel the doctrine of contradiction (*Widerspruch*), which simply means, that in every idea we form, there must be *two* things opposed and dis-

¹ Die Logik ist die Wissenschaft der reinen Idee, das ist der Idee im abstrakten Elemente des Denkens. Logik, p. 28.

tinguished, in order to afford us a clear conception and a definite meaning. In this doctrine of contradiction, or rather we would term it, of opposition, Hegel finds the rhythm of the whole logical process, the two opposites answering to the two former movements of the dialectic process above described, and the union of these two in *one idea*, corresponding with the third or highest movement of the same. Logic, accordingly, falls into three parts:

I. The doctrine of Being, or thought in its *immediacy*.

II. The doctrine of Essence, or thought in its communication.

III. The doctrine of Notion, or thought in its regress, in which it forms a complete idea in itself.¹

Now if the problem were placed before us, to trace the existence of all things from their very first coming into being to the attainment of their present form, we should have (beginning with things as they now are) to follow them *backwards*, until we came to *nothing*, and there we should find the starting-point of the process of creation. In like manner, when we attempt to analyse the development of *thought* (which with Hegel is identical with existence), we must seize the very emptiest, most abstract, most meaningless notion we can find, and from that deduce all the rest in regular course by the process already laid down. This primary and most abstract of all notions is that of *being* (*seyn*), and forms accordingly the first division of Hegel's logic.

¹ Logik, p. 161.

First Division.—Doctrine of Being.—In asking how a thing can *begin to be*, we require to see its transition from *Nothing* into *Being*. Without the idea of nothing, we could never have that of being, and *vice versâ*; so that the two stand to one another as opposites, and both together combine to form a complete notion, viz., that of bare production, or the *becoming* (werden), of something out of nothing. This, then, is the first step in philosophy, the primary pulsation of the dialectic process. In it being and nothing stand as the poles; and the conjunction of them forms the notion of *existence*. In these three (sein, nichts, werden), we see the type or symbol of all thought, showing us, that for every complete idea there must be the combination of two opposites. Neither being or nothing can exist as a reality of itself; each is but the opposite pole of the other, and it is in their indifference that the act of coming into existence first appears. Hence the meaning of the extraordinary equation that stands at the threshold of Hegel's philosophy, *Sein = Nichts*; and hence, the first conclusion, that the notions of being and nothing combined, form that of existence. This may appear clearer to the German scholar, if we say in Hegel's language, that *Sein* and *Nichts* form *Daseyn*.¹

Now, the same process goes over again. *Daseyn* gives rise to a twofold movement, by which a still higher point in the scale of being is attained. An existence may be viewed in relation to itself, or in

¹ *Logik*, p. 165—179.

relation to the things around it ; it may be existence *an sich*, or existence *für andre*. Here then we have another opposition ; an existence can only be *this* because it is not *that*.¹ *This* and *that* taken alone would be absolutely meaningless, the one must limit or bound off the other. Existence alone would only give a general and undefined idea ; to have the notion of a distinct existence, *a reality*, there must be the negation as well as the affirmation of Being. A rose, for example, is a rose only because it is *not* a lily, or anything else—blue is blue, because it is not green. So, *universally*, the affirmation of any real thing implies in it the negation of a certain amount of attributes. Here, then, we have the category of *Quality*, that is, *Being*, determined and limited by a negation ; the steps through which we have arrived at it being Seyn, Daseyn, Für-sich-seyn. This category clearly shows us how we come to the notions of finite and infinite. A real something (etwas) is distinguished from all other things, by its being limited or bounded off : destroy these limitations, and it flows back into infinity. Thus the notions of finite and infinite are both *per se* incomplete ; the one is necessary to the other, and both arise from that movement of logical thinking by which we rise from the bare notion of being, to that of some particular existence.²

The three ideas we have just deduced, falling under the category of quality, all point to the *inner* nature of things, and not to their outward

¹ There is here a play upon the German expression for existence, *Daseyn*.

² Logik, p. 180, *et seq.*

form. The next category in the doctrine of bare existence (Seyn) is that of *quantity*. Under this are explained the notion of continued size and divisible size ; of pure quantity and of a particular quantity ; these two united forming the notion of degree (Grad). Degree, then, as implying a quantity joined to a quality, gives the idea of measure (Mass), or the relation of one quantity to another, and thus completes the first division of logic, or “*die Lehre vom Sein.*”¹

Second Division.—Doctrine of Essence.—In the second division of logic, Being appears in a more determined, definite, and independent form. Instead of having the characteristic of bare empty existence, it has now that of real concrete existence, and gives rise to the doctrine of essence, “*die Lehre vom Wesen.*”² This second movement of the logical process, as seen in the nature of things, answers to the second movement in *mind*, where the understanding separates the object from the consciousness, and places it as a distinct reality before us. Here, again, we have a threefold division. Essence may appear either as the *ground*, or substratum of existence (as in the words, matter, spirit); or it may appear as *phenomenon*, *i. e.*, as expressing those qualities of objects which cannot be separated from them; and then, by uniting the notion of substratum and attribute, we attain the conception of *a real thing* in plain contradistinction from that universal essence of which

¹ Logik, p. 201, *et seq.*

² Logik, p. 223.

it forms a part. Here then is resolved the great problem before which the Eleatics paused, that of reconciling the individuality of each separate thing with the unity of the absolute essence.

The doctrine of essence contains the explanation of a great number of those philosophical ideas, which have played an important part in every system of metaphysics. Under its first movement, we have the deduction of the notions of identity and difference; of concrete existence; and of *a thing* as containing *properties* peculiar to itself. Under the second movement we have the ideas of a phenomenal world, of matter and form, and of relation generally, all deduced in philosophical order. Then, lastly, in the third movement, we have the union of the other two, giving the categories of substance, of cause, and of action and reaction. All these notions, with many of their collateral ideas, are grasped by the dialectic method, in its onward progress, and made to take their due position as organic parts of the whole system.

We have now traced the dialectic process through two of its spheres of action, and shown how, from the bare idea of being, we come at length to that of a distinct, essential, real *thing*. When we attempt to proceed beyond this, we get into a higher region of thought, the doctrine of notions (*die Lehre vom Begriff*), answering to the reasoning process in formal logic, and in nature answering to all organism and life, up to the highest developments of mind itself.

Third Division.—Doctrine of Notions.¹—The three divisions of logic will now stand thus in relation to each other :—1. The doctrine of BEING answers to the abstract conceptions of time and space, giving us only those ideas which are purely qualitative or quantitative. 2. The doctrine of ESSENCE answers to time and space, not in the abstract but the concrete, filled up, the one with actual existence, the other with real phenomena, such as those of substance, attribute, cause, and effect, &c. Then, lastly, the doctrine of NOTION (*Begriff*), refers to all those things which have peculiar characteristics of their own—real and definable objects, whether in the region of organised or inorganised existence. This last doctrine, that of notions, in the same manner as the other two, has three divisions : first, notion in its *subjective* point of view, giving the different movements of the mind as seen in simple apprehension, judgment, reasoning ; secondly, notion in its *objective* point of view, giving us the conceptions of the three realms of nature—the mechanical, the chemical, and the organised ; and, thirdly, we have the union of subject and object, expressed by Hegel in the word *idea*, which rises, also, through three successive steps : first, as life ; then, as intelligence ; and, lastly, as the absolute idea—the summit of the whole process, and synonymous with Deity. It must not be supposed, that in this third division of the Logic, we have got beyond the region of *pure thinking*. We have simply traced the evolution of *thought* upwards, through its more empty and abstract forms ;

¹ Logik, p. 315, *et seq.*

enriching it with a greater fulness of meaning at every step, until we have arrived at the conceptions which we find embodied in nature and the soul—those Platonic archetypes, pure thought in themselves, to which the universe itself is perfectly conformable.

To give a clearer idea of the several divisions and subdivisions of Hegel's logic, we shall subjoin the following scheme, which the reader may now compare with the above description.

LOGIC COMPREHENDS,

I.

THE DOCTRINE OF BEING. (Die Lehre vom Seyn).

A. *Quality.*

a. Being (Seyn).

b. Existence (Daseyn).

c. Independent existence (Für-sich-seyn).

B. *Quantity.*

a. Pure quantity (Reine Quantität).

b. Divisible quantity (Quantum).

c. Degree (Grad).

C. *Measure.*

(Mass.) The union of quality and quantity.

II.

THE DOCTRINE OF ESSENCE (Lehre vom Wesen).

A. *Ground of Existence.*

a. Pure notions of essence.

b. Essential existence (Existenz).

c. Thing (Ding).

B. *Phenomenon.*

- a. Phenomenal world (Welt der Erscheinung).
- b. Matter and form (Inhalt und Form).
- c. Relation (Verhältniss).

C. *Reality. Union of Ground, and Phenomenon.*

- a. Relation of substance.
- b. Relation of cause.
- c. Action and reaction.

III.

DOCTRINE OF NOTION (Lehre vom Begriff).

A. *Subjective Notion.*

- a. Notion as such (Begriff als solches).
- b. Judgment (Urtheil).
- c. Inference (Schluss).

B. *Object.*

- a. Mechanical powers (Mechanismus).
- b. Chemical powers (Chemismus).
- c. Design (Teleologie).

C. *Idea.*

- a. Life (Leben).
- b. Intelligence (Erkennen).
- c. Absolute idea (Absolute Idee).

In the above sketch of Hegel's Logic we have given only the chief divisions ; of the ingenuity and logical acuteness with which these divisions are deduced the one from the other, and the whole framework built up, we can give no idea whatever. To comprehend this fully, we must refer the reader to his Cyclopædia of Philosophical Sciences (vol. vi.),

published in a complete edition of his works by his most distinguished pupils (Berlin, 1840).

We must now proceed to the second division of philosophy, namely,

*PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE.*¹

The transition from the logic to the philosophy of nature is by no means a clear and intelligible step in the Hegelian system. Logic is the region of bare thought; the philosophy of nature is the region of *thought externalising itself*. Nature is still thought, but thought in its objective movement, being the exact opposite to logical thinking; while both combine in the philosophy of *mind*. In order to account for the process of thought in the universe taking that objective form in which it appears as nature, Hegel has recourse to a somewhat far-fetched doctrine concerning the descent of the absolute idea from its original unity, as subject-object, into a state of separation; just as in pure logical thinking the understanding separates what was *one* in the original consciousness. Schelling, as we have already seen, regarded nature as a part of the process by which the absolute realised itself: he viewed the process of development accordingly as necessary, and regarded all existence to be the play of a supreme fate. Hegel regarded the dialectic movement, by which the absolute separates itself

¹ This forms the subject of the second volume of the second part of the Encyclopædie, in the most recent edition.

and externalises itself in nature, as perfectly *free*, so that his pantheism did not profess to destroy the notion of the freedom and absolute personality of God.

Now, just as in logic the absolute process appeared in its threefold movement, so also does it appear in the three corresponding ones in nature. Nature in its empty undetermined forms (answering to the doctrine of Being) appears in that peculiar aspect which is taken of it in the science of *mechanics*. Here there are, first, the purely mathematical ideas of matter, as existing in time, space, and motion; next, there are the mechanical properties of matter, as gravitation, &c.; and, thirdly, there are the absolute properties as viewed at large in the construction of the material universe, where the fixed stars, the binary stars, and the solar system, give us illustrations of the different kinds of forces which are actually in operation.

The second division of the philosophy of nature is *physics*. Here we take into consideration, first, the general forms of matter, as earth, water, light, &c.; secondly, the phenomena of specific gravity, cohesion, elasticity, &c.; and, thirdly, the specific forms, as acids, alkalies, metals, &c.

The third division of this branch of philosophy is *organism*, in which the other two movements are combined. The first movement gave to nature its matter; the second its form; the third at length affords that in which matter and form are united. Here, again, we have first, the geological world; secondly, the vegetable world; and thirdly, the

animal world ; the last leading us to the point where the philosophy of nature ends and that of spirit begins. To give a clearer idea of the chief steps under which this branch is treated, we annex the accompanying scheme.

PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE COMPREHENDS,

I.

Mechanics.

- a.* Mathematical properties.
- b.* Mechanical properties.
- c.* Properties of absolute motion in space.

II.

Physics.

- a.* General forms of matter.
- b.* Relative forms of matter.
- c.* Specific forms of matter.

III.

Organism.

- a.* Geological structure.
- b.* Vegetable structure.
- c.* Animal structure.

Each one of these triplets forms one complete pulsation of the dialectic process, and were it not entering too far into detail, each one of the minor

divisions would be seen to contain a minor movement of the same threefold process as well. We hasten on, however, to the third division of philosophy, namely,

PHILOSOPHY OF MIND.

At the point where nature leaves off, having carried on her operations to the very highest pitch of perfection in the human organisation, the philosophy of mind begins. In this, as the third great division of philosophy, we have pure logical thought and nature (the subjective and the objective) fully combined. The steps of this part of Hegel's philosophy, corresponding with those in logic and nature, are as follows.

PHILOSOPHY OF MIND.

I.

Viewed subjectively.

- a. Anthropology.
- b. Psychology.
- c. Will.

II.

Viewed objectively.

- a. Jurisprudence.
- b. Morals.
- c. Politics.

III.

*Absolute Mind.*a. *Æsthetics.*b. *Religion.*c. *Philosophy.*

Each one of these several points contains a separate branch of mental philosophy in itself. Thus, in the subjective movement, we have, under *anthropology*, the different races of mankind discussed, varying, as they do, according to the relative development of their moral and intellectual being. It is, in fact, the doctrine of the *soul* in its original constitution, varying, however, according to the physical peculiarities, the national characteristics, and different idiosyncrasies of individuals. Under *psychology*, we have the nature and peculiarities of the different mental processes in feeling, perceiving, remembering, imagining, &c., all analysed and arranged according to the Hegelian method, while under the title of *will*, we have the classification of our active powers, showing how they lead to all the results of practical life.

In the objective movement we are introduced to the whole range of *moral* philosophy, or mind in its relations to those without. This is divided—first, into the rights of person and property, as in jurisprudence; secondly, into the rectitude of actions generally, viz., morals; and thirdly, into domestic and public duties, which may be termed (in the extended meaning of the word) *politics*.

Lastly, when we rise to mind in its absolute form, we no longer view it as belonging to the individual, but to the race, and look for its development, not in the life of a single man, but in the history of the world. The primary development of the human mind, in the process of civilisation, is that of *art*; for the age of poetry precedes all others, and mythology is ever the form in which truth is first embodied, recognised, and taught. To this succeeds the age of *religion*, in which God is regarded as a distinct personality, separate from the world and separate from the mind of the worshipper—a Being to whom we owe entire allegiance and submission. Under this head Hegel discusses the various forms of religion which have appeared in the world, from the earliest ages to the present. Last of all comes the age of *philosophy*, in which religion rises to its pure reflective form, and truth comes forth from her symbols to appear in her naked reality. The conclusion, then, and at the same time the top-stone of mental science, is the *History of Philosophy*, as it has appeared in the world; in which we find thought developing itself gradually (according to the process given in the science of logic), from the period of Parmenides, who stood upon the lowest step (that of bare existence), up to the present day, in which Hegel himself has deduced the *absolute idea* in all the fulness of its truth and glory!

Most of the branches we have thus briefly indicated, were treated of by Hegel in distinct courses

of lectures. With regard to the subjective branches, namely anthropology, psychology, and the theory of the will, nothing, I believe, has been published in a separate form. Of the other branches, however, abundant material has been furnished by the editors of the Encyclopædie, to give us the fullest insight into Hegel's views on the several questions to which they refer. The "Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts," (Elements of the Philosophy of Right,) was edited by Gans, and published in 1833, comprehending in one volume the Hegelian doctrine with regard to abstract right (jurisprudence), to morality at large, and to social rights or politics. The lectures on "Æsthetics" were edited by Hotho, and are considered among the most interesting of Hegel's works. Here we find the same trichotomy as in all the other branches of investigation, namely, art, or the beautiful considered, 1st, *in itself*, as a conception of the human mind; 2dly, in its objectivity, as seen in the successive schools of art, historically considered; and, 3dly, in its perfect realisation, as seen in the special branches by which the beautiful has been expressed. The lectures on the philosophy of religion, together with those on the proofs of the Divine existence, were first brought out by Marheineke in 1832, (2 vols. 8vo). Here, according to the same threefold method, we have religion viewed, 1st, subjectively, giving us the abstract conceptions with which our religious life is conversant; 2dly, we have religion objectively considered, that is, the history of its various developments in

the world ; 3dly, we have religion fully realized and perfected in the eternal truth of the Christian doctrines. Nay, Christianity itself falls under the same law of development, for it reveals to us the kingdom of the Father, or Christianity in its pure conception—the kingdom of the Son, or Christianity in its objective development—and the kingdom of the Spirit, which is its completion, as manifested in its spiritual operation in the church. Lastly, the lectures on the history of philosophy were edited by Michelet in 1834—5, (3 vols. 8vo), and the volume on the philosophy of history by Gans in 1837. In these volumes Hegel has put forth all his power, displaying at once his vast acquaintance with the history of thought in the world, and his great capacity of reducing the phenomena given in history to an organic and systematic whole. These last lectures are in fact the crowning piece of his system, and, beside their intrinsic value, are remarkable as forming the basis of the French school of modern eclecticism, which, under the impressive genius of Cousin, has achieved a reputation in every part of the civilised world.

Before we quit this, our skeleton sketch of the Hegelian philosophy, it will be desirable to give our readers some idea of its application to various important questions of a religious nature. First, with regard to the nature and personality of God, Hegel is far from departing so widely from pantheistic opinions, as to admit a distinct personality out of and apart from all other finite personalities. With him God is not a *person*, but personality itself, *i. e.*

the universal personality, which realises itself in every human consciousness as so many separate thoughts of one eternal mind. The idea we form of the absolute, is to Hegel the absolute itself, its essential existence being synonymous with our conception of it. Apart from, and out of the world, therefore, there is no God ; and so also, apart from the universal consciousness of man, there is no Divine consciousness or personality. God is with him the whole process of thought, combining in itself the objective movement as seen in nature, with the subjective as seen in logic, and fully realising itself only in the universal spirit of humanity. With regard to other theological ideas, Hegel strove to deduce philosophically the main features of the evangelical doctrine. He explained the doctrine of the Trinity, by showing that every movement of the thinking process is, in fact, a Trinity in Unity. Pure independent thought and self-existence answers to the Father—the objectifying of this pure existence answers to the *λογος προφορικός* the Son, God manifested in the flesh ; while the Spirit is that which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, the complete reunion of the two in the Church.¹

¹ The opinions of Hegel on the personality of God, have been much contested. By many it is affirmed, that in the second edition of the “*Religion Philosophie*,” the passage is effected from Pantheism back to a proper Theism. Michelet remarks on this point, (“*Geschichte*,” Vol. ii. p. 646,) “The true doctrine of Hegel on the personality of God, is not that God is *a person* in the same sense that others are ; neither is he simply substance,—He is the eternal movement or *the universal*, ever raising itself to a subject, which first of all in the

Hegel's Christology, again, agrees in the main ideas with the evangelical doctrine, except that his attempt to deduce the whole from philosophical principles gives to it a complete air of rationalism. He views the idea of redemption as the reunion of the individualised spirit of man with the Spirit of eternal truth and love. By faith we become one with God, forming a part of himself, members of his mystical body, as symbolised in the ordinances of the Church. This view of the Christian doctrines has been more fully developed by Strauss, who has entirely denied a historical truth to the New Testament, and made the whole simply a mythological representation of great moral and spiritual ideas. On the doctrine of immortality, Hegel has said but

subject comes to objectivity and a real consistence, and accordingly absorbs the subject in its abstract individuality. God is, therefore, with Hegel, not *a person*, but personality itself, the only true personality; whereas the subject which, in opposition to the Divine substance, will become a particular person, is *evil* (das Böse). Because God is the eternal personality, he has eternally allowed the objectifying of himself (nature) to flow from him, in order, as spirit, to attain self-consciousness in the Church. If this spirit is in man, then he is man no longer individually considered, but *God*, which in him has attained personality."

In contradistinction to this passage, I may give another from Hegel himself, (*Philosophie der Religion*, Vol. ii. p. 481.) The standpoint to which we have arrived is the Christian, and must be viewed by us a little more closely. We have here the idea of God in his entire freedom: this idea is identical with his existence; existence is the most empty abstraction, and the idea is not so empty that it does not contain this in itself. We have not to view the being of God in the poverty of abstraction, in its bare immediacy, but we must view *being* here, as the being of God, the material for realising the full idea of God.

little, and that little by no means satisfactory. However the depth and comprehensiveness of his system may charm the mind that loves to rationalise upon every religious doctrine, it can, assuredly, give but little *consolation* to the heart that is yearning with earnest longings after holiness and immortality.

In some other points, not of a religious nature, Hegel has given us many views of great originality. His philosophy of history is especially valuable, as containing investigations into the peculiar characteristics of the different ages of the world, that throw great light upon the intellectual progress of civilisation. Into this, however, we shall not enter ; we have attempted to give a comprehensive view of his whole system, just sufficient, we trust, to guide the student in appreciating the place it occupies at the head of the idealism of the present century, and must leave him, however unsatisfied with our details, to follow them up from the original source.¹

In reading the foregoing sketch, it will probably suggest itself to many of our readers—How could a system of philosophy so strange, so paradoxical, so entirely opposed to all the ordinary habits of thinking common to mankind at large, be seriously maintained by any earnest and truthful mind ? A little consideration, however, may tend to show us, that his doctrine of absolute identity is not so unnatural and extravagant as some might at first imagine. Really speaking, it all turns upon two fundamental

¹ Note F. Appendix.

points: first, the unity of contradictories, or opposites, as the principle of human knowledge; and secondly, the identity of being and thought.¹

Now, with regard to the former of these principles, there is, undoubtedly, a *germ* of truth in it, which every one must admit. What is knowledge, but the perception that two different things are fundamentally one? Take any judgment, any proposition you choose, and you find that it contains the assertion, that two different things form a unity or identity between them. The subject and predicate are the differences—the copula expresses their identity. In proportion as knowledge advances, the tendency to generalise becomes greater; differences become more and more merged into higher principles; until finally, as all theists admit, the universe, with its infinitely diversified phenomena, is seen to spring by some process of creative power from God, the first cause—the highest unity; where, accordingly, we have the one and the multiple forming the very basis of all created existence. Thus Hegel's doctrine of the fundamental unity of opposites, which has been so often reproached as a contradiction in terms, has its *germ* in the common sense and common belief of humanity. The other principle, the identity of being and thought, is, perhaps, somewhat more abstruse, but still, it is not so utterly baseless as some suppose. For, if all finite existence can be referred, as we have just seen, to a primitive unity; if there is an absolute

¹ See Rémusat "De la Philosophie Allemande," p. cxxii.

ground in which all things subsist, then the phenomenal, the finite, the so-termed *material*, is but mere appearance, the real substratum is the infinite essence. But this infinite essence only exists as it is *thought*; universal Being is a purely rational conception, a necessary idea; it does not come to its full reality except in the human consciousness. Hence, the real and ideal meet in one; the very essence of the former consisting really in a process of the latter.

Admit then these two fundamental principles, and the other parts of the Hegelian theory follow step by step. The ideal and the real being one, thought and existence being identical, the process by which thought is developed must be the process of the whole of nature; the laws of logic must be the laws of the universe; and the dialectic movement, or the method by which our notions are eliminated, is the method by which all things come into being and subsist. The rhythm of existence thus being found, all that is necessary is to apply it to the construction of a complex system of philosophy, which shall draw within its mighty grasp the totality of the phenomena of man, of nature, and of Deity.

Whilst, however, there are some considerations, which appear to justify the Hegelian hypothesis, yet there are, as it appears to us, insuperable objections under which it labours. First of all, we would ask, Whence does this process, this great rhythm of existence proceed? Hegel pretends to have solved

the whole secret of being; to have no realistic starting point; to begin with zero, and deduce every thing. This pretension, however, is not fulfilled. The *law* of existence is still *assumed*, still unaccounted for; so that the huge fabric of philosophy he has erected upon it, however ingenious and admirable in itself, still is equally dogmatical, in its ground principle, with the pantheism of Spinoza, or the ordinary theism of mankind. *In principle*, it is just as easy to imagine an infinite *Being*, the God of Christianity, as the source of all things, as an infinite *law*. And such a supposition, we need not say, is infinitely more in consistency with the phenomena of the human mind, and of the structure of nature around us.

Secondly, there is a confusion between the logical or formal processes of thinking, and the real process of things themselves, which can never be reconciled with human experience, and never gain the practical belief of mankind. The logical idea, commencing with nothing, simply by its own inward movement or self-unfolding, creates the universe! Of course we may, *in thought*, begin with the most abstract notion, and then go on adding attribute to attribute, till we have placed the whole concrete universe before us. But this can never be put down as identical with the process of creation itself. A logical or universal whole is, speaking realistically, a nonentity; whereas Hegel makes it the *essence* (*seyn*) which contains in it potentially the whole phenomena of being.

Thirdly, the system of Hegel is utterly inconsistent with the results of psychology, *i. e.* with the most obvious facts of the human consciousness. Human freedom entirely vanishes under its shadow. The man is but the mirror of the absolute; his consciousness must ever roll onwards by the fixed law of all being; his personality is sunk in the infinite; he can never be ought but what he really is. Moral obligation must here perish, because freedom is annihilated; and the law of progress being fixed, man becomes irresponsible; this conclusion is one against which no logical finesse can ultimately save us. Either the man (or the me) is himself absolute and infinite, or he is a finite personality, having the source of his being out of himself. To suppose the former, altogether contradicts the consciousness of self, which is that of a finite power capable of being resisted. If he is the latter, then there is that in being, which does not pass through our own individual thoughts, and beyond the logical process there is a something absolutely unknown.¹

Finally. In the Hegelian system, Theism, with all its mighty influence on the human mind, is compromised; for Deity is a process ever going on, but never accomplished; nay, the Divine consciousness is absolutely one with the advancing consciousness of mankind. This being the case, the hope of im-

¹ M. Rémusat has employed this argument with great force against the Hegelian method. "De la Phil. Allem." p. cxi.

mortality likewise perishes, for death is but the return of the individual to the infinite, and man is annihilated, though the Deity will eternally live. Religion, if not destroyed by the Hegelian philosophy, is absorbed in it, and, *as religion*, for ever disappears.¹

Hegel died in the full blush of his reputation, and before he had published half the views, which he had matured, beyond the walls of the lecture-room. At his death seven of his most distinguished pupils combined, according to his own wish, to publish his lectures, collated at once from his own manuscripts, and from the notes they had themselves taken of them as orally delivered. The names of these seven are Marheineke, Schulz, Gans, von Henning, Hotho, Michelet, and Förster. Under their superintendence, an edition of his works has now been completed, which is regarded as the last and authoritative view of his whole system.² Not only, how-

¹ Among the modern French writers, there are many elucidations of Hegelianism. Among these, M. C. Rénouvier (*Manuel de la Moderne*,) has pronounced the method valid; Dr Ott, on the contrary, in his work upon Hegel, takes throughout the part of a bitter and uncompromising opponent. Many of his arguments, however, are well worth considering.

² This edition consists of 17 vols. 8vo. Vol. i. contains the "Philosophical Treatises," edited by Michelet: vol. ii. The "Phænomenologie," by Schulz: vols. iii. iv. and v. contain the "Logik," edited by von Henning: vols. vi. and vii. the "Encyclopædia of Sciences," by von Henning, (which contain the "Logik," in a much briefer and better form): vol. viii. "The Principles of the Philosophy of Right," by Gans: vol. ix. The "Lectures on the Philosophy of History," by Gans: vol. x. The "Lectures on Æsthetics," (two first parts) by von Hotho: vols. xi. and xii. The "Lectures on the Philosophy of

ever, have Hegel's pupils done justice to the memory of their master by the publication of his works and remains, but, forming themselves into a school, they have at once defended his doctrines against the numerous attacks which they have had to sustain, and applied them vigorously to the different branches of theology, law, history, and science. Amongst these, Henning and Schulz¹ have further elaborated his views on natural philosophy; Gans, on jurisprudence;² Michelet, on morals;³ Weisse,⁴ Röscher, and Hotho, on æsthetics; and Werder, on logic;⁵ whilst in theology, a host of writers have sprung forth to wield the Hegelian weapons, and contend on every side for a religion of complete Rationalism.

It is in the department of theology, chiefly, that the great battle of Hegelianism has been, and is still being fought. Within the last ten years, indeed, philosophy and theology in Germany seem to have become almost synonymous; the transcendent importance of the great fundamental principles of

Religion," by Marheineke: vols. xiii. xiv. and xv. The "Lectures on the History of Philosophy," by Michelet: vols. xvi. and xvii. The "Miscellaneous Writings," by Förster and Boumann; to which a "Life of Hegel" has since been added by Rosenkranz.

¹ "Grundriss der Physiologie," von C. H. Schulz.

² "Das Erbrecht in Weltgeschichtlicher Entwicklung." "System des Römischen Civilrechts." "Rückblicke auf Personen und Zustände," &c.

³ "System der Philosophischen Moral." (1828).

⁴ "System der Ästhetik als Wissenschaft von der Idee der Schönheit."

⁵ "Logikals Commentar und Ergänzung zu Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik." (Berlin, 1841).

man's religious belief absorbing almost every other purely philosophical question. Incapable, however, of coming to a united understanding upon these topics, the Hegelian school has separated into *three* divisions, each regarding the nature of religious truth in a different point of view. To explain the variations of these three parties, we must observe, that there are two inward sources from which religious truth may be supposed to spring; the one is the direct intuition of our religious nature, excited either by faith or experience; the other is pure logical reasoning; and it is according to the predominance of one of these sources over the other, that Hegelianism takes its lower or its higher pantheistic signification.

To illustrate this point, let us take the subject of music. The knowledge of music may be possessed in two different ways. It may be known by virtue of a fine musical sensibility; or it may be known as a rigid science of time and intervals, quite independently of the æsthetic faculty. In the former case we should say, we understand music by virtue of our direct perception, or intuition of its nature and beauty; in the latter case, we know it as the development of scientific ideas. Now, just so is it with *religion*. There is such a thing as a religious sensibility, or a religious perception, which looks at once upon the object of the religious affections, and derives a kind of intuitive knowledge of them; but there is also, says the rationalist, a *science* of theology, in which the whole mass of our

religious ideas are evolved by logical inference from fundamental and philosophical principles. Just in the same manner, then, as some might lay greater stress upon the musical sensibility, and others on the musical science, so also do some of the Hegelian philosophers appeal more to the religious intuition, and others to the evolution of religious truth, by the logical idea.¹

The first, and least rationalistic branch of the Hegelian school, is that which is represented by Göschel, Erdmann, Gabler, and Schaller. According to the view of these writers, our religious perception must be respected as well as the power we possess of drawing logical inferences. That it is possible to deduce rationally the whole sum and substance of theological truth, they freely admit, (otherwise they could not take their station among the rationalists,) but in every case, they affirm, our religious consciousness must be consulted, to *confirm* and *approve* the inferences of our reason. Hence, on the ground of this consciousness, they assert the full personality of the Deity, and likewise defend historically the literal views given by the Scriptures of the person of Christ, as the God-man—the Mediator between the human and the Divine. These opinions, there is every reason to believe, very much accorded with those of Hegel himself,

¹ The affirmation of one or the other of these elements as supreme, forms the twofold distinction of philosophers, which has become so celebrated in Germany, under the titles of Denkphilosophen and Glaubensphilosophen.

who ever professed his belief in the ordinary faith of the Lutheran Church.

There is, however, a considerable difference in the views even of this branch of the Hegelian school. Göschel is by far the least rationalistic of the whole; in fact, he goes almost as far as Hinrichs, in affirming, that our religious perceptions are the *main thing*, and that philosophy is only of use in illustrating and confirming them. Gabler, Erdmann, and Schaller are in a purer sense of the word Hegelians; but instead of rejecting the natural religious perceptions as untrustworthy, they accept them in their full significancy, but attempt to assimilate them, by the logical process, so as to assume the matter and form of their philosophy.¹

The second branch of the Hegelian school, at once the most numerous and influential, is represented mainly by Rosenkranz, Marheineke, Vatke, and Michelet. By these writers, the religious perceptions and feelings are only appealed to as a *secondary* source, by which we simply *illustrate* the results of logical thinking. Accordingly, the personality of God is taken by them in a far more general and pantheistic sense, as agreeing better with the nature of that dialectic process by which all theological, as well as other ideas, are developed. The doctrine, again, respecting Christ, his union

¹ They seek, says Michelet, "Das Glaubensresultat durch den dialektischen Process zu verdauen, und ihr eine berechtigte Stelle im Systeme anzuweisen."—Entwicklungsgeschichte, p. 313.

with human nature, and his redemption of the world, is taken from its plain historical meaning, and made to represent general ideas, such as the reunion of the fallen and separated will of man, with the infinite reason—the soul of the world; while the immortality of the mind is made to refer, not so much to the duration of our personality, as to the general perpetuity of *thought*, of which our minds are but individual movements.

With regard to the more individual shadings of this branch of the Hegelian school, Rosenkranz stands nearest to those before mentioned, forming, as it were, the transition point between the two. With him, it seems a matter of *hesitation*, whether he shall assume the religious perceptions to be *unexceptionably* valid, and then seek to reduce them to a philosophical form, or whether he shall give to his logical procedures a more independent permission to eliminate their own results. Next to Rosenkranz, comes the celebrated theologian Marheineke; while Vatke and Michelet assume a still more rationalistic position—one, namely, in which the results of faith and reason are absolutely identified, and the religious perceptions made *one* with the logical results.¹

Up to this point, then, in the Hegelian school, religious consciousness and the deductions of reason had gone hand in hand, only with a varying preponderance of importance attached either to the one side or the other; but in the third and newest

¹ See Michelet's "Entwicklungsgeschichte (1843,) lecture 15.

Hegelian party there is a complete breach formed between the two, it being formally declared that we have to follow the dictates of our reason, *to whatever extent they may contradict the dictates of our religious perceptions and instincts*. The representatives of this school are Strauss, Bruno Bauer, Conradi, and Feuerbach. With them, pantheism attains the point at which it ever tends, that, namely, in which it becomes fully synonymous with atheism. In their system, no God is admitted to exist, out of and apart from the world; *i. e.* in the proper sense of the term, there is no God at all. With reference, moreover, to the New Testament, it is well known that these writers have rationalised upon it to the furthest possible extent, regarding the whole of the historical portion as a *designed* mythology, in which are conveyed to us great and immortal truths.

Thus, then, is the cycle of Hegelianism completed; and to make the best of these divisions, it is asserted by some, that the three branches above mentioned (usually termed the right hand, the centre, and the left,) exhibit the threefold movement of the dialectic process, and thus form in their combination the integrity of the whole school.¹

¹ We may take the following passage, from Michelet's summer course of 1842, as a summary of the whole view here given of the present position of the Hegelian school:—

“The unfolded totality of the Hegelian school may be pictured in a brief compend. With the pseudo-Hegelians (Fichte, jun., Weisse, Branis, &c.) perception, under the form of faith or experience, is the sole source of positive religious truth. On the extreme *right* of the

Since Hegel's death, the conflict between the Hegelian school and their opponents, (especially with Schelling, and those who adhere to his doctrine,) has gone on with unmitigated vigour, and even rancour. Up to the present hour, work after work is teeming from the press, in which the respective claims of these two great absorbing systems are advocated; whilst on theological grounds they are both alike attacked by the more orthodox, with all the weapons of learning and eloquence.

To enter into this endless discussion would be altogether impracticable in the present sketch, and perhaps equally uninteresting to the majority of our readers. The general feeling amongst all, except those who are pledged almost to the very words of the master, is, that *Hegelianism proper* is on the wane. The idealistic movement found in it, its culminating point; that point is now past, and a tendency is

Hegelian school, perception, (as with Hinrichs,) is the absolute *criterion* of the results found by means of logical thinking; while Göschel gives it still a decisive voice in all religious affairs. Schaller, Erdmann, and Gabler, who form the pure *right* side, allow to religious perception a *consultative* vote, which, however, like a good ruler with his subjects, they never leave *unrespected*. Rosenkranz, who ushers in the centre, proceeds for the most part in accordance with the voice of perception, but in some cases rejects it. In Marheineke, the perception is the *witness*, who can only speak respecting the *fact*, while the question of law or right can only be decided by speculative thinking. On the left of the centre, (that taken by Vatke, Snellmann, and Michelet,) the perception is a true-hearted servant, who must subject herself obediently to *reason* as mistress. Strauss, on the left side, makes her a *slave*, while with Feuerbach and Bauer she appears verily as a *paria*.

already manifesting itself in the general tone of philosophy, to come back to a more realistic system, in which matter and form shall not be confounded, or the divine personality denied, or the foundations of man's immortality undermined.

Mournful as are the *final* results of the sweeping rationalism we have detailed, the works to which it has given rise have tended to throw light, perhaps to an unprecedented degree, upon many of the most important points connected with the philosophy of matter and of mind, of human nature, and human destiny ; neither shall we have to regret the whole rationalistic movement, if the atmosphere of truth is cleared by the storm that sweeps across it—if errors are carried away in its course, and the great foundations of man's belief left standing more visible and more certain than ever.

If the reader will turn back to the commencement of this section, he will be able to refresh his memory respecting the twofold course which philosophy has taken in Germany since the time of Kant. In *his* system, as we then remarked, there is, on the one hand, an idealistic, on the other, a realistic element. There is a real existence given in sensation, but yet all we know of it is bare phenomenon. The course in which the idealistic side of Kant's philosophy has flowed, we have now pointed out. We have seen the speculative method, as the modern idealism is sometimes termed, in its subjective movement, completely realised in Fichte : we have

seen its objective movement set forth with great copiousness by Schelling: and we have seen it rising beyond both, up to its most abstract form, in Hegel. In Fichte, the Absolute is to every one his own individual self, beyond the powers and perceptions of which self, he shows, we are utterly unable to reach: in Schelling, the Absolute is the living soul of the universe, of which everything, both in the natural and mental world, is an expansion: in Hegel, the last realistic point is resolved; the Absolute becomes a process, ever unfolding and renewing itself in the world, and that, too, identical with the process of thought—with the method of philosophy. Here we have idealism reaching its culminating point, the matter of our knowledge becoming synonymous with the form: thought one with existence.

Having traced the ideal side, therefore, up to this position, and witnessed its culmination, we leave it to futurity to mark its descent, and turn now to the *realistic* philosophy, which has originated from the Kantian principles. The immediate elaborator of this element was unquestionably Jacobi, whom, on chronological grounds, we ought now to have taken under review, but that his mystical tendency removes his system onward to a future chapter. There is one name, however, which stands forth with great prominence among the philosophers of the present age, who, though an idealist, has, almost single-handed, stemmed the torrent of ultra-idealism, and acquired a reputation, second only to the heads

of those great systems, which we have already considered. The name to which I refer is that of HERBART.

John Frederick Herbart was born in the year 1776, at Oldenburg. In 1805, he became professor of philosophy in the University of Göttingen; in 1808, he succeeded Kant at Königsberg; and in 1833, returned to Göttingen, in order to supply the place of Schulz, where, in the summer of 1841, he died.

Herbart's philosophy was the reaction produced by the boldly-advancing idealism of Fichte and Schelling. Their extreme principles on the ideal side threw him back upon a completely realistic hypothesis, which, for many years, he sustained single-handed, with a patience and a logical ability that reflected the highest credit upon his talents and perseverance. In terming Herbart, however, a realist, we are not to suppose that he returned to the ordinary notion of matter, as being a hard, dull, impenetrable substance, that is perceived immediately by the aid of sensation. This position (that of common sense) he never admitted; on the contrary, he asserted, that we can never get beyond our own consciousness, but that all we can know immediately are the phenomena which take place there. From this principle, however, he drew a different conclusion from that of Fichte. Fichte asserted that the idea which actually passes through the mind is synonymous with its *objective meaning*: Herbart showed that the idea (the actual inward

process) is one thing, and that the reality which is implied in it is another. We have, for example, the idea of matter; and as, of course, we know nothing of it which is not contained in our idea, Fichte concluded that, to us, matter, and the idea of matter, are the same. On the other hand, Herbart showed that the idea is simply the mental or subjective phenomenon, and that this phenomenon *implies* an objective reality, of the truth of which it is at once the voucher and the test. It is true that our ordinary perceptions involve, in many instances, the most palpable contradictions; and the consequence is, that some thinkers have lost all confidence in man's intellectual powers, while others have denied the reality of the objects themselves; but the proper course of philosophy is manfully to solve the difficulty, instead of falling into scepticism on the one hand, or pure idealism on the other.¹

The basis of all philosophy, then, according to Herbart, is the whole sum of the phenomena which pass through the human mind. Instead of laying down the existence of an absolute essence, from which all things are derived, he regarded the whole mass of our ordinary convictions as containing the matter, from which alone we must take our start in erecting a system of philosophy. That we have a mass of ideas, which are naturally formed in the mind by its own constitution, and the circumstances in which it is placed, none can deny: these ideas,

¹ See the preface to his "Psychologie."

then, we must detain, examine, elaborate; and, if truth can be arrived at by man at all, it must be arrived at by this process. Herbart's notion, therefore, of philosophy was very simple; it was an analysis and investigation of our ideas, so as to resolve any contradictions they may seem to imply, and to educe from them all the truth which they contain.¹

The process by which the necessity of philosophy comes to be felt is the following:—When we look round us upon the world in which we live, our knowledge commences by a perception of the various objects that present themselves on every hand to our view. What we *immediately* perceive, however, is not actual essence, but phenomena; and after a short time, we discover that many of those phenomena are unreal; that they do not pourtray to us the actual truth of things as they are; and that if we followed them implicitly, we should soon be landed in the midst of error and contradiction. For example, what we are immediately conscious of in coming into contact with the external world, are such appearances as green, blue, bitter, sour, extension, resistance, &c. These phenomena, upon reflection, we discover not to be so many real independent existences, but properties inhering in certain substances, which we term things. Again, when we examine further into these *substances*, we discover that they are not real ultimate essences, but that they consist of certain elements, by the

¹ Lehrbuch zur Einleitung in die Philosophie. See at the commencement.

combination of which they are produced. What we term the reality, therefore, is not *the thing as a whole*, but the elements of which it is composed. Thus the further we analyse, the further does the idea of *reality* recede backwards ; but still it must always be somewhere, otherwise we should be perceiving a nonentity. The last result of the analysis is the conception of an absolutely simple element, which lies as the basis of all phenomena in the material world, and which we view as the essence that assumes the different properties which come before us in sensation. Experience, then, on the one hand, gives us a vast number of phenomena, which appear to be so many actually existing realities ; reason, on the other hand, obliges us to reject these phenomena as realities, and assign a simple element for the basis of them, as that which is alone *essentially* true. Here, then, arises a contradiction between reason and experience ; and as we cannot fall back upon scepticism without being involved in a still greater difficulty, we look to philosophy so to elaborate and interpret our ideas, both those of experience and of reason, as to solve the contradictions, and to give us a clear insight into the truth. The philosophy which accomplishes this object is termed METAPHYSICS.¹

Now, in order to see what branches the science of metaphysics contains, we must consider how many fundamental ideas there are, to which our ordinary

¹ For a clear and full statement of Herbart's philosophical standpoint, see Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," lect. iv.

perceptions may be generalised. From the first moment we perceive objects around us, we begin to classify them, and express the classification by general terms ; this process goes on until we come to the three fundamental notions of *thing*, *matter*, *mind* ; the first being the notion of a unity with several properties ; the second being that of an object existing in space ; the third designating that which has self-consciousness. All these three notions give rise to contradictions in the following manner.

First, if we contemplate a *thing*, as *e. g.* a piece of gold, we observe that it is yellow, heavy, malleable, &c. And all these properties together go to make up the *unity* which we term gold. If one of these properties were taken away, it would be gold no longer ; and if they were all taken away, nothing whatever would remain to our perception ; so that here we come to the contradiction, that the unity is in fact a plurality. Secondly, if we contemplate the notion of *matter*, we perceive that it is that which fills a certain space, while at the same time it consists of atoms infinitely divisible ; and which, therefore, in their ultimate form can fill no space at all. Here, then, is another seeming contradiction, viz., that atoms, ultimately immaterial or having no extension, should give rise to extended and solid substance. Thirdly, if we contemplate the *mind*, we find that it is at the same time in continual change or perpetual movement, and yet is ever the same unalterable personality. Now these three

fundamental ideas, each giving rise to a separate contradiction, point us to three branches of metaphysics. The first is *ontology*, which in Herbart's sense means the science that treats of the nature and constitution of things in general, and more especially the explanation of the problem—"how can the one be a multiple, and the multiple a unity?" The second branch is *synechology* (from *συν* and *εχω*), which is the doctrine of *matter*, or the phenomena of the real as existing in time, space, and motion. The third branch is termed *eidology* (from *ειδωλον*), which means the doctrine of ideas or images, and includes psychology, or the science of mental phenomena.¹

I. Of Ontology. The great problem here to be solved is, to show how different predicates can exist in one substance; and conversely, how one simple substance can exhibit a plurality of predicates. This problem is explained through the medium of a principle which is termed by Herbart the *method of relations*. The principle is briefly as follows:—Instead of supposing a thing to be composed of one absolutely simple essence, we must suppose it to be composed of *many*, all independent of each other; and it is the different relations in which they stand to each other, that give the appearance of many predicates existing in one subject. Just as a binary star appears one to the naked eye, but is seen to consist of two by the medium of the telescope, so an object in nature, *i. e. a thing*, appears to be one,

¹ Consult the "Haupt-punkte der Metaphysik."

but by means of philosophy is discovered to be manifold. The separate and independent essences of which all things are composed ever remain absolutely the same, as they are entirely self-sustained ; but when viewed in different lights, and from different points of view in relation to each other, then they exhibit a multitude of different characteristics.

To show how this principle accounts for the phenomena in question, Herbart explains very fully his doctrine of *accidental views* (*Zufällige Ansichten*). In mathematics, we know that one and the same line may be often viewed either as sine, or tangent, or radius of a circle, without its ceasing to be a straight line, and the same straight line. In music, again, a tone may be a fourth, fifth, or sixth, &c., according to the key in which we are playing ; so also here the same essences may remain the same, and yet *appear* different, according to the relation in which we view them. On this principle, then, Herbart seeks to explain the contradiction which lies at the basis of ontology ; *i. e.* to show that in different lights the same object may be both a unity and a plurality at the same time.¹

II. Synechology. The object of this branch of metaphysics is to give an intelligible explanation of the phenomena of matter ; to show how things exist or hold together in space ; and thus to solve the contradiction of infinite divisibility. To accomplish this purpose, Herbart first attacked and

¹ "Haupt-punkte der Metaphysik," p. 10, *et seq.*

refuted Kant's theory of time and space, which, as we have seen, makes them simply the subjective laws or forms, under which all sensation is carried on. Instead of this, he showed that the notions of time, space, and motion, express certain *relations* in which objects stand to each other. Now the idea of extension, as applied to matter, is the direct result of the idea of space; whatever, therefore, will explain the notion of space, will also explain that of extension.

Herbart's doctrine of *intelligible space*, by which he sought to elucidate these points, is in brief somewhat of the following nature:—He begins with viewing each ultimate monad as a mathematical point, thus expressing the negation of all extension with reference to them in their primary form. One mathematical point, as also one monad, expresses simply locality, and no space whatever; if, however, we add another point to it, and then another to that, in the same direction, we get the idea of *a line*, which is the first dimension. By the addition of other points we are led in the same way to fill up the intervals by the notion of distance, and thus at length to complete the idea of space in all its three dimensions. Space, then, has nothing to do with the monads singly, and can in no sense of the word be attached to them; but no sooner do we see them *in relation* to each other, than the idea of continuity, of space, of extension, arises in the mind. Precisely the same thing is true both of time and motion; so that, by this same method of relations in another

view of it, the main problem of *synechology* is solved as well as that of *ontology*.

Matter, then, according to Herbart, is in the ordinary sense immaterial, and without extension; but it obtains all the primary properties, such as extension, inertia, &c., from the *relation* which the monads hold to each other. Upon the same principle he explained the phenomena of attraction and repulsion, and, then, of organisation; by which means he finds a transition from the abstract sciences of matter into the philosophy of nature, and a method of explaining the constitution of all the varied portions of the vegetable and animal world.¹

III. *Eidology*. In this branch of metaphysics, the principles already deduced in the other two branches are now to be applied to elucidate the phenomena of the human mind, and to show how those principles agree with our own inward experience. This is the part of his philosophy, which Herbart elaborated with the greatest assiduity, and in which he has most displayed, at once, the power and originality of his genius. The mind we feel to be *one*: at the same time it is conscious of an ever-changing multiplicity of states and feelings, which we must show are perfectly consistent with its unity. Here, then, the method of relations again comes to our assistance, separating the human consciousness into its proper elements, and showing that, what could not be predicated of the individual parts, can be pre-

¹ "Haupt-punkte der Met.," p. 18, *et seq.* Also, "Lehrbuch zur Einleitung in die Phil." p. 204.

dicated of the whole, in their various relations to each other. The mind, as subject, is ever the same; but it sees itself, as object, existing in numerous different states—those, for example, of feeling, thinking, willing, &c., and all these different states we call at the same time one *self*.

To account for these different states, Herbart goes into a singular mechanical theory of consciousness; the idea of which is, that all mental phenomena are simply different *relations* in which the mind exists to other things. When these relations are such that no particular point stands out from the rest to claim our attention, but all, as it regards our consciousness, are in a state of equilibrium, we are in a condition of mental quiescence. When one particular point becomes prominent, then it represses the rest, just as a greater force does a smaller, and a corresponding state of consciousness is the result. When there is a struggle for some perception to become prominent over the others, the state of mind is termed *desire*. *Feeling* is the condition produced by the obtrusion of a perception between two antagonist powers. In this way Herbart explains all the facts of consciousness by a species of mechanical calculation, making them all result simply from the relations in which the mind stands to the different objects that work upon it.¹ Having thus completed the province of metaphysics, properly so termed, he calls in, at length, the aid of *faith*, in

¹ This forms the subject of his work entitled "Psychologie als Wissenschaft."

order to lay a basis for the philosophy of religion, with which his system concludes.¹

From this slight view of Herbart's method, it becomes at once evident, that it stands in direct opposition to the purely idealistic systems we have before considered. The reader, who has looked far into the history of philosophy, will not be at a loss to see the affinity there is between Herbart's theory of matter and that of Boscovich; while the similarity of his doctrine of monads to that of Leibnitz, compels the conclusion that many of his ideas must have been directly borrowed from that acute thinker. That Herbart has fully sustained his ground against the energetic idealism to which he stood opposed, would be too much to grant; but, unquestionably, he brought to light much truth on the other side of the question; nor, perhaps, have his exertions been amongst the least of the means, which have succeeded in giving to the philosophy of the present age an incipient, although a very decided realistic tendency.²

The names which have passed under our review, namely, those of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and

¹ "Lehrbuch," p. 213. Herbart's transition from theoretical philosophy to faith, as the ground of our religious conceptions, is nearly identical with that of Kant, from the pure to the practical reason.

² Herbart's philosophy was peculiarly rich in its practical applications. Amongst his other works there is an interesting volume containing a "Kurze Encyclopädie der Philosophie aus praktischen Gesichtspunkten." (Halle, 1831.)

Herbart, comprehend, with the exception of the mystical school, almost all that is really original in the German metaphysics. There are a few thinkers, however, of a recent date, who have attempted to mould the Hegelian philosophy into a more satisfactory form; and a few others, who have set up some new philosophical principles, although they are not of sufficient reputation to need any very particular mention at present. The four writers who are termed by Michelet, in his "History of German Philosophy," pseudo-Hegelians, are Fischer, Fichte, jun., Weisse, and Branis. These authors all acknowledge the excellency of Hegel's *method*, and allow him due honour for the discovery, but they all agree with Schelling, that Hegel has only taken up the negative side of philosophy, that his system can only afford the purely logical process of thought, and that he has not succeeded in proving, that his categories express the real *essence* of existence as well as the *form*. In a word, they protest against the absolute idealism of the Hegelian system, and show the path back again to a realistic or positive philosophy, from whence the *material* is to be obtained, by which the bare forms of the categories of thought may be filled with a real and essential existence. With regard to the idea of God, moreover, they attempt to step beyond the Hegelian point of view; to deduce his proper personality; and to explain the relation in which he stands to the world, as a distinct entity.

The avowed object which Fischer has had in

view, is to take the dialectic method of Hegel and the realistic philosophy of Schelling together, and evolve them to a higher unity, in which the realism of the one should appear in all the consecutive and logical form of the other. Branis, in his "System of Metaphysics," appeals mainly to the facts of consciousness, as the living page in which all truth is to be read; resting the ultimate evidence of it, entirely upon faith in our own inward experience. Weisse has gained some reputation by the energy with which he has sustained against Hegelianism, the accusation of having put the abstract metaphysical form of truth, in the place of its concrete reality.¹ The most celebrated, however, of this class of authors, is J. H. Fichte, whose philosophy presents on the whole the most complete specimen of the school we are now considering, and of which, therefore, we shall give a brief description.

Fichte's system follows a very consecutive development, which greatly facilitates its accurate comprehension. His first purely philosophical work was entitled "Beiträge zur Charakteristik der neuern Philosophie," (Contributions towards the designation of Modern Philosophy), in which he clears his ground, and gives a popular view of his philosophical stand-point. His next work was a preparation for his philosophical system, properly so

¹ The chief of Weisse's writings are a "System der Æsthetik," "Grundzüge der Metaphysik," and one entitled "Die Idee der Gottheit."

called ;¹ giving simply a general sketch of it in the preface, but aiming at a systematic critique upon the different philosophical tendencies of the age. The third volume (*Grundzüge zum Systeme der Philosophie*) makes a formal commencement of the system, and carries it on through the whole of the subjective sphere ; showing the development of self-consciousness from the first dawning of empirical knowledge, up to the highest form of speculative thinking. The fourth part, entitled *Ontology*, effects the passage from the subjective to the objective sphere, tracing the progress of Being from its most abstract to its most full and concrete form : which, then, leads to the philosophy of religion, by which the whole cycle is completed.²

The starting point of all philosophy, according to Fichte, is the immediate *fact* of consciousness. This must be *to us* absolutely the primitive, for any other and more definite starting point would have to be sought for by means of those facts themselves. This being the case, philosophy defines itself as the *reflective development* of what the consciousness originally contains. "Self-consciousness," he remarks, "is the beginning, middle, and end of philosophy ; so that philosophy can be formally described as the self-completion, or self-examination

¹ "Ueber Gegensatz, Wendepunkt und Ziel heutiger Philosophie." (Heidelberg, 1832).

² Of Fichte's "Religion-Philosophie," I can only speak from notes of lectures, which I took from him in 1841, before the work itself was published.

(selbst-Orientirung) of the consciousness, respecting its original possession,"¹

First Epoch of Self-consciousness.—The original state of our consciousness is that of sensation and perception. Here we are simply within the region of the instinctive intellectual life. Whether we regard the bare sensational feeling, or the immediate perception which accompanies it, we rise no higher than the lower animals in the scale of intelligence.²

Second Epoch of Self-consciousness.—Here we get into the region of representative knowledge. In the former epoch the mind is simply engaged with the material *which is actually presented to it*. Let that material (consisting of its own affections and the presentation of direct objects) be removed, and it would sink back into absolute unconsciousness. To prevent this, therefore, the mind has the power of retaining its ideas, and representing them to itself as objects of continued contemplation. This is primarily effected by means of memory, carried on to a higher perfection by the imagination, and completed by means of language or signs.³

Third Epoch of Self-consciousness, (Das Ich als denkendes).—Here we get into the region of abstract ideas. The constructive faculty begins to operate upon the data of consciousness, and reduces them into form and order. The laws or processes of thought are given in the science of logic. First,

¹ Grundzüge zum Systeme der Phil. p. 16.

² Ibid, p. 27.

³ Ibid. p. 51—79.

we have a simple *conception* (Begriff), which is explained as a general representation, viewed in relation to a particular object, (Eine Allgemeine Vorstellung, aber mit dem Bewusstseyn, und der Beziehung auf ein in ihm befasstes Besondere). Next we come to the *judgment* (Urtheil), which is the development of the conception up to a higher degree of generality, (die Fortbestimmung des Begriffs durch sich selbst): and, lastly, to the *inference*, which is the merging of the more particular into the pure categories of thought—into the highest unities.¹

Fourth and highest Epoch of Self-consciousness. (Das Ich als erkennendes).—In the first epoch we saw the bare material of our knowledge afforded by sensation and perception; in the second and third, we have seen the mind retaining its primary intuitions, and evolving them by the logical process to their highest unity. In the one we have *matter*, in the other *form*; but now, in this last sphere of self-consciousness, we have the reality of matter and form combined together, in which combination real scientific knowledge first shows itself. This highest region of consciousness, then, we may describe as the region of *philosophy*, and we have only to trace the development of the different philosophical systems, in order to see the actual unfolding of the philosophical consciousness. This development has taken the forms respectively of the empirical, the reflective, and the speculative stand-point.

¹ Grundzüge zum Syst. der Phil. p. 80—204.

The empirical stand-point regards philosophical truth as the organic elaboration of the data of our outward experience. It comprehends the whole sphere of observation, of induction, of analogy, of sensational philosophy, and has attained its highest expression in the writings of Locke.¹

The reflective stand-point *begins* with scepticism (Hume)—the denial of the certainty of experience, as employed in the former philosophy. This leads on to the critical form of philosophy (Kant); in which the certainty of human knowledge is established, by a criticism of the subjective forms of thought. The critical philosophy, finally, merges in the doctrine of pure subjective idealism (Fichte); which is the negative side of speculative knowledge.²

Lastly, the speculative stand-point combines the empirical and reflective, and leads to the very highest forms of philosophical truth. This begins, first, with the pure faith-philosophy, a philosophy which asserts a direct intuition of the absolute as distinct from man, (Jacobi). Next it proceeds to the system of *absolute thinking*, in which the process of logical thought is regarded as being in itself a revelation of the absolute truth, (Schelling and Hegel). Lastly, by the union of the faith-philosophy with that of speculative thinking, we reach the highest point of self-consciousness, that in which the manifestation of God is regarded as the sole reality; the human mind lost, at length, in the Divine.³

¹ "Grundzüge zum Syst. der Phil." p. 210—247.

² Ibid. p. 248—285.

³ Ibid. p. 286—317.

Such, then, is the subjective side of Fichte's philosophy, that in which there is a systematic evolution of the human consciousness by the dialectic method of Hegel, from its first phenomena to its highest speculative intensity.

Having accomplished the subjective portion of his labour, and carried up the development of the consciousness to the point where self-knowing becomes identical with the knowledge of Deity, Fichte now makes the passage to the *objective* sphere of his system—to the province of *ontology*. Here, the dialectic process again commences its operation, and, guided by the light it affords, the author goes through all the categories of existence, in the same manner as in Hegel's Logic, tracing it through the doctrines of being and of essence, up to absolute personality as predicated of Deity itself. In this part of his philosophy, however, there is a very essential difference between the view that is taken of our knowledge of the absolute, and that given by Hegel. In Hegel, Deity is the eternal process of self-development, as realised *in man*; the divine and human consciousness falling absolutely together. In Fichte, on the contrary, the Divine nature is never the direct object of our consciousness, but can only be known to us by its manifestations.

The knowledge of God and of his manifestations forms the subject of speculative theology, the very highest branch of philosophy. Of these manifestations there are three great spheres of observation—nature, mind, and humanity. In nature we see the

Divine idea in its lowest expression ; in mind, with its powers, faculties, moral feelings, freedom, &c., we see it in its higher and more perfect form. Lastly, in humanity, we see God, not only as creator and sustainer, but also as a father and a guide. History exhibits the development of the plan of his providence, which plan would only be to us a mere possibility, were it not realised in the flow of the ages, and witnessed by our own actual experience in the world. Thus, then, for the highest knowledge of God we have to fall back upon *experience*, the very point from which we started in the path of intellectual science. Here, therefore, we see the whole cycle complete. Philosophy begins with experience, and ends with experience, containing between these two poles all the various steps of speculative thinking which have raised the dim and empty experience of our primary life, up to the full and clear intuition of Deity in all the blaze of his brightest manifestation.

Such, in brief, are the main points of the system we proposed to describe. It may be wanting in the exuberant fertility of Schelling, and in the logical grasp of Hegel ; but assuredly it puts the results of the German idealism more within the grasp of ordinary minds, and by linking the shadowy transcendentalism of the former systems to the terra firma of our actual experience, attempts not altogether unsuccessfully to combine the common sense of the one with the refined speculation of the other.

With regard to those idealistic philosophers who

have put forth systems of their own, independent of the greater authorities of the age ; we might mention Suabedissen, Hillebrand, Troxler, and Krause, as among the principal ; always, of course, excepting those who have taken a direction in favour of mysticism. The peculiarity of these writers is, that they have all made the attempt to combine in one the subjective and objective branches of the modern idealism, to unite the principles of Schelling and Hegel, and evolve something better than either. Suabedissen has with peculiar care elaborated the philosophy of religion, in which he has combated the idea, that God is the eternal process of the universe ; and deduced from the bare notion of self-existence, the proper essence, spirituality, and personality of Deity.

Hillebrand also bent his chief attention upon this same theological point. His great principle is, that God, or the Absolute, has revealed himself to us immediately in our own consciousness : to prove, however, that we can trust our consciousness upon these points, must be the province of philosophy ; and it is in this sense only that philosophy can give any proof of the existence of a Deity. Troxler's philosophy is of the microcosmic order. To him the source, the centre, the object of all philosophy is *man*. All truth and all knowledge is simply the revelation of the original elements of our own reason, and the *reality* which is implied in them. The soul is a perfect mirror of the universe, and we have only to gaze into it with earnest attention, to dis-

cover all truth which is accessible to humanity. What we know of God, therefore, can be only that which is originally revealed to us of him in our own minds.

Lastly, Krause terms his philosophy a system of transcendental idealism, in which, commencing with the subjective principle of observing what exists in our own consciousness, he raises himself step by step to the acknowledgment of one, eternal, self-existent being. To characterise these different shadings of the ideal philosophy of Germany more accurately would hardly consist with the brevity of our present plan; we shall, therefore, now take leave of this most remarkable page in the history of the world's philosophy, with a single observation.

The great peculiarity, which distinguishes the modern philosophy of Germany from that of every other country, is the use of the ontological instead of the psychological method. Descartes, Locke and others, following up the Baconian principles, affirmed, that in taking a survey of the whole mass of human knowledge, we must *commence* with an observation of the powers and conceptions of the human mind, as the instrument by which alone everything is to be comprehended; *i. e.*, we must make a full inspection of the facts of the case, before we can safely proceed to erect the edifice of intellectual philosophy. The German philosophers, on the contrary, despising this method, begin by laying down the most primitive and abstract *notion* we have of existence, as though it were a reality, and

proceed onwards evolving the idea, until step by step they have constructed the whole universe. Now, those who follow the psychological method, give us for the most part a valid philosophy, but too often a shallow one. Bent upon the observance and classification of the facts of mind, they too frequently remain altogether within this circle without touching upon any of the deeper problems which ontology brings before us. On the other hand, the abettors of the ontological method, beginning to philosophise before they have investigated the instrument by which alone they can proceed, and, consequently, having no definite boundaries fixed within which human knowledge must be confined, are obliged to *assume* their first position, (such as that of intellectual intuition, or the dialectic process,) and thus are often imperceptibly led into a region of philosophy as extravagant as it is baseless. The true march of philosophy is the union of the two. Starting from the analysis of the human mind, trying, as Locke expresses it, the length of the line by which we are to sound the ocean of truth, we must go steadily on, directed by the light of induction, until, at length, we find ourselves legitimately landed within the region of ontology. From thence we may start upon a new voyage of discovery, still guided by an analysis of the facts and implications of our reason, until we run out our line to the full length, and wait for the brighter apocalypse of another world.

To decry the whole process of speculative philosophy, as it has developed itself in Germany, can

arise from no other cause except ignorance or prejudice. Doubtless there may be much extravagance, and many erroneous conclusions to be met with in a sphere of research so lofty, and lying so much in the twilight of human knowledge; but the questions it raises are those in which we have the deepest interest, while the glimpses of great and comprehensive truths which it affords, give us the hope of a future, which shall draw aside the veil from much which is now obscure, and usher the human mind into the light of a more perfect day.

“Verily,” says an eloquent French writer, “to see imbecile and discouraged minds exhaust themselves in ridiculous attacks against philosophy—to see them bent upon denying the part it plays in the history of the world; to see them ignore the reality of human science, and believe that a great nation can consume three-quarters of a century in mooting sterile chimæras, such a blindness of intellect can only fill one with astonishment; but when to this blindness is joined a spite and irritation against the triumph and empire of ideas, a holy emotion seizes the mind, and we in our turn, by virtue of our hope for the progress of humanity, reply to these declamations, Stop! do not commit an outrage upon our common mother—human thought; do not make use of the little that you do know, to insult that which you know not. Rest (for we will cheerfully allow you) in the easy paths of the old traditions; these traditions have themselves been a product of humanity, and are now its legacy; but we are not to be

hindered from pressing onwards to fresh ideas, by such disdainful airs."¹

We close our remarks with the words of another philosopher, who now occupies one of the highest stations in the literature of a neighbouring country.

"It is time," says M. de Rémusat, speaking of the German philosophers, "it is time that we should venture to fix our eyes upon the object which they have set before them, and to enter into the region in which they have marched; without, however, following their footsteps. We must imitate them, preserving at the same time those precious guarantees of method, of erudition, of language, of experience, which are the foundation of *our* philosophical wisdom. Let *us* bring reasons as well as they for grasping fundamental questions, but let us feel bound either to resolve them in a contrary sense, or to conclude upon the impossibility of resolving them at all. In one word, let us reinstate that which is most difficult, but most elevated in all philosophy, namely, METAPHYSICS."

SECT. III.—*The English School of the Nineteenth Century.*

In sketching the history of idealism generally, from the revival of philosophy in modern times, I termed that of our own country *polemical idealism*, as originating rather from opposition to sensational-

"Au delà du Rhin," par E. Lerminier. Vol. ii. p. 114.

ism than from the spontaneous tendencies of the national mind. In Germany, the ideal tendency has ever seemed to spring from the very soil, and to have flourished there without any of the excitement derived from opposition; in England, on the other hand, it has lived upon warfare; and whenever the bold advances of sensationalism have ceased, it has always been inclined to cease with them. The deistical writers, who at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries sustained their sceptical principles by expanding the germs of sensationalism, which lay hid in the philosophy of Locke, gradually died away; and with them disappeared, one after the other, the traces of our idealistic philosophy. By the close of the eighteenth century the school of English idealism may be said to have become altogether extinct, and every attempt at metaphysical speculation seemed to merge in the supreme authority of Locke, or the efforts of his successors.¹

At the opening of the nineteenth century, therefore, we may consider that, as far as idealism is concerned, the ground was perfectly clear. Sensationalism, indeed, was again advancing with rapid strides, urged on by the impulse acquired from the brilliant literature of France, and fostered by the writings of Priestley, Belsham, and the school of which they stood at the head; but of the ideal

¹ A few idealistic works, such as Drummond's "Academical Questions," appeared about the beginning of this century, but not of sufficient weight to need any particular mention.

tendency hardly the slightest appearance was left in England to remind us, that it was still the country of Cudworth, Clarke, and Berkeley. Neither, indeed, has the present century, in its progress, been very forward to supply the metaphysical deficiency which existed at its birth. That the reaction has now set in we fully believe; but it has come tardily and unwillingly, and it may yet, to all appearance, be some years before an energetic anti-sensational school shall grace the literature of our native land.

With regard to the *sources*, from which the seeds of a more rationalistic system of philosophising have been slowly imported, there are two which almost immediately suggest themselves to our minds, namely, Scotland and Germany. Great as is the difference between the philosophy of these two countries, yet there are, unquestionably, some important points of resemblance, which place them together as the antagonists of empiricism; and we can hardly be mistaken in saying, that all the reaction which has been experienced in England against sensational principles has borne the complexion of one or other of these two philosophical schools. Scotland, true to its principle of "common sense," has insisted on the validity of those ideas, which appear to be the natural product of the human reason, and resisted every attempt to resolve them into sensational elements; and Germany, boldly grappling with the deepest questions of ontology, has drawn a broad distinction between the pheno-

menal world, as viewed by the senses, and the real world, as comprehended by the intellect. In both cases there is a direct appeal made to the authority of reason, and an equal determination not to remain shut up within the boundaries of sense.

England, with the clear-headed practical wisdom for which it stands pre-eminent, has been gazing, from time to time, upon the results of both these schools, and has been considering what there is in each that is likely to prove unsound, and what that can be safely adopted. It has entered with earnestness into the philosophy of Reid, and appropriated its results without copying its too often tedious dialectical dulness; while, on the other hand, it has been lately approaching the borders of the German spiritualism, and showing a disposition to sift the wheat out of the large mass of chaff which that voluminous school presents. From these circumstances, then, we are furnished with a principle of classification under which to describe the manifestations of idealism, which have appeared in England during the present century. We shall divide them into two classes:—First, the English metaphysical school, which is predominantly under Scottish influence; and secondly, that which is predominantly under German influence; leaving at the same time in each some scope for the working of the peculiar characteristics of the national mind.

(A.) SCOTO-ENGLISH METAPHYSICIANS.

That so profound a writer as Dr Reid, followed up by the elegant and learned additions of Dugald Stewart, should raise a vigorous school of philosophy in Scotland, without producing some effect upon English philosophical thinkers, could hardly have been possible. The labours of these northern metaphysicians, more especially in disabusing the world of the errors couched under the phraseology of the ideal system, became, during the earlier part of this century, more and more appreciated throughout the whole of our country, until gradually their works came to be widely regarded in the south as the best text-books of intellectual science. The tone and character of philosophical writing in England by degrees were altered; and if it did not *entirely* follow the Scottish models, yet, at least, it exhibited the great influence which those models had exercised upon the ordinary habits of metaphysical thinking. It is the history and nature of this influence, accordingly, which we now purpose to depict. To do this we shall not make out any chronological list of authors, who have manifested this leaning to the northern school; but we shall briefly present the names of the *most prominent* metaphysical writers, who have been distinguished respectively by a more near or remote degree of approximation to the Scottish system, as illustrative of the influence of that system upon the country at large.

1. And first, we notice those who have followed Scottish authority almost without deviation. Not a few of our countrymen, (who have either been educated at the Scottish universities, or have confined their philosophical reading to the volumes of Reid, Stewart, and Brown,) have so entirely imbibed the philosophical spirit of the north, as never to depart from it except here and there on some very few, and those unimportant points. Those who have read Dr Payne's "Elements of Mental and Moral Philosophy," will see in it an excellent example of the style of metaphysical writing we are describing. With good abilities for analysis, and a mind well versed in habits of abstract thinking, the author has furnished us with an abridgment of Brown's philosophy, which, while it wants the poetry of the original, at least equals it in the clear and succinct statement of the philosophical doctrines which are advanced. In the moral department, moreover, the errors and imperfections of Brown are well portrayed; and an attempt is made, if not entirely successful, yet at least forcible and well sustained, to lay afresh the foundations of the emotional theory of morals. In this attempt he has been seconded by Spalding, in his "Philosophy of Christian Morals," another author (now unhappily no more), who, while he adopted for the most part the Scottish system of philosophising, yet knew well how to take an original view both of its principles and results. To dwell upon this peculiar feature of our English philosophy, however, is unnecessary, since we may

regard it almost as a pure reflection of the Scottish school; let it suffice here to notice the simple fact, that such a reflection has existed in this country, and has given rise to some few excellent digests both of moral and psychological science.

2. We may point out the existence of certain other metaphysical writers, who have used the productions of the Scottish school, not so much in the light of *authorities*, as of *guides* and incentives to their own independent thinking and research.

At the head of these we should place ISAAC TAYLOR, a name now, indeed, better known in the controversies of the theological than those of the philosophical world. The metaphysical works of this profound and voluminous author began with a small book, entitled, "Elements of Thought," which has gone through several editions, and remains, to the present day, we believe, the only brief and elementary introduction to mental philosophy (which is worthy the name) in our own language.¹ The works, however, upon which Mr Taylor's philosophical reputation now mainly rests, are the four volumes, which appeared successively under the titles of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm," "Fanaticism," "Spiritual Despotism," and "The Physical

¹ Since the above was written, there has appeared a little work, entitled, "Outlines of Mental and Moral Science, intended as introductory to the Logic, Metaphysics, and Ethics of the University Course,"—Dublin, 1846. It is comprehensive and useful to the young student, but not much to be depended on beyond the Scottish philosophy.

Theory of another Life." In these treatises, he has opened what may be considered, in our own land, a new field of philosophical observation. Impatient of confining himself to the study of mind in its isolated state; not content, like the closer followers of the Scottish system, simply with looking within, and marking the processes of the *individual self*, he has cast his eye upon the broad surface of humanity, and attempted to gather results from the *action of mind*, as seen working on the vast theatre of the world. Mr Taylor's genius is of the telescopic rather than the microscopic cast. In the sweep of his thought he may overlook some of the smaller points which lie in the road, but assuredly the range of his vision is far beyond men of the ordinary stamp, and his power of generalising often of the most striking character. Every volume he has published is, in its tone and spirit, a stern rebuke to the pretensions of that shallow sensationalism, which is apt to carry away the unreflecting mind by its vaunted simplicity, and bears an unequivocal witness to the majesty of the human reason, even in its wanderings and its follies.

With all this independence of thought, with his capacity of grasping great principles, and drawing inferences from the widest survey of facts, yet there is still, we think, impressed upon many pages, the bias derived from the Scottish philosophy. With a mind so vigorously constituted, a spirit not to be daunted by difficulties, a reason that does not shrink from the most recondite and startling conclusions,

when they come in its way, and a disposition to identify truth, though it lie at present in the twilight of man's vision, we see everything in this author that would almost necessitate a sympathy with the more able and profound of the continental metaphysicians, were his sympathies transferred for a time from Britain to Germany. An elaboration of the most valuable points of the higher metaphysics, adapted to the capacity of English minds, would, in such hands, prove of incalculable service, in satisfying the now growing demand for a sounder and more comprehensive system of philosophy. For the realisation of this service, however, we have no ground of expectation, as Mr Taylor has become too much entangled in party strife to be able to devote himself to those deeper problems, from neglect of which such strife really proceeds. It is not, assuredly, one of the least complaints we have to make against the din of theological controversy, that it should entice minds such as these from the calm pursuit of a lofty and spiritual philosophy into its vortex, and cause the more local and temporary questions of the day to absorb those intellects, which might be establishing the greater principles that lie at the foundation of human knowledge, and by the establishment of which, alone, we can hope for repose from the noise and confusion of lesser contention. As it is, however, the name of Isaac Taylor, in connexion with the philosophy of human nature, as developed in his *Histories of Enthusiasm, Fanaticism, and Spiritual Despotism*, in connexion

with his physical theories on the spiritual state, and also in connexion with his more recent advocacy of the sanctity and inviolability of moral obligation, will ever hold a decided place in the history of English thinking during the nineteenth century.

3. There is yet another class of thinkers, sometimes expressing their opinions through the pages of the Magazine or Review, and, in a few instances, by original works, who, while they oppose the Scottish philosophy *as a whole*, yet avowedly borrow from it many of their views and principles. Such a writer is Mr Smart, the author of a volume containing three separate treatises, and entitled, "Beginnings of a New School of Metaphysics." Mr Smart is a professor of elocution of long and established reputation, and has been allured from his proper department—that of rhetoric—into the kindred topics of logic and metaphysics. His first work upon these subjects was entitled "Sematology; or, the Doctrine of Signs," in which he lays down the respective nature and limits of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. The view which is taken of the two latter branches gives us a very clear line of demarcation between them; logic being regarded as "the right use of words, with a view to the investigation of truth," and rhetoric as "the right use of words, with a view to inform, convince, or persuade."¹

According to these definitions, logic is the art of gaining knowledge through the medium of words,

¹ Sematology, p. 87.

while rhetoric has the sole office of placing them in such positions, whether they form syllogisms or anything else, as to inform or convince others. This division has certainly the merit of some degree of originality, and the method in which the matter is argued is highly ingenious ; although we cannot make up our mind as to the propriety of altering so widely the ancient landmarks between the two branches in question. As a metaphysician, Mr Smart proposes to remodel and revive the philosophy of Locke, and combine with it the more recent results of the Scotch metaphysicians.¹ Through the whole of his treatises, great stress is laid, as might be expected, upon words, as the signs and media of our thoughts. He wishes, in fact, to do away with the philosophy of mind, as such, and to reduce all science to these three branches:—1. The study of things physical, or those which exist distinct from our thoughts ; 2. The study of things metaphysical, or those which do not exist apart from our thoughts, (as a circle—man—good—the edge of the table—the power of God ;) and, 3, Logic, which is to show the method of procedure to be followed in both.² Many good thoughts are scattered up and down these pages, although, as a whole, we cannot divest ourselves of the feeling, that they lead to an indefinite and unsatisfactory result. They afford us, however, at present, a very obvious example of the working of the Scottish philosophy upon the modern Lockian

¹ Sequel to Sematology, p. 30.

² Ibid. p. 160.

school of England, and the influence it has had, both in moulding its phraseology, and in *reversing* its sensational tendency.

4. We mention, lastly, under this head, the present Cambridge school of metaphysics, which is the *transition point* between the English philosophy that partakes of the Scottish, and that which partakes of the German character.

For above two centuries past, the University of Cambridge has given indications of a sympathy with metaphysical speculation, which, though sometimes almost disappearing, has ever and anon made its reappearance, as circumstances have called it forth. During the seventeenth century, the Platonic divines, to whom we have before referred, excited a spirit of philosophical inquiry, which must be reckoned among the most remarkable literary manifestations of the age. Locke, though himself one of the ornaments of Oxford, yet, after his death, was far more zealously studied and admired at Cambridge than in his own university, and it was there first that a school of metaphysics was formed which owned him expressly as its authority and its guide. Dr Law, one of the greatest advocates of the Lockian sensationalism, was a resident at Cambridge, and Dr Hartley, the originator of the modern school of association, was a student at the same university.

The earlier philosophical school of Cambridge was idealistic; the latter was decidedly sensational. Perhaps the brilliant discoveries of Newton in phy-

sical science may have tended to absorb all purely metaphysical investigation, or where it did not absorb, to divert it into a more objective channel. But, notwithstanding the ardour with which physical science long has been, and still is, studied at Cambridge, we are mistaken if the dawn of a new philosophical spirit is not even now manifesting itself within the walls of that university. Many are the intimations which are given there from time to time of a sympathy with the German idealism; many the attempts to revert from the wonders of nature to the deeper wonders of the spirit of man; many the intimations that, amidst all the blessings conveyed by the extension of physical science, yet "there are fields of grander discovery; that though Nature's works be great, we are greater than all these; that what we can least do without is not our highest need; that man cannot live by bread alone."¹

The new intellectual spirit, now rising in the university of Cambridge, may be perhaps most clearly seen in the reform of its moral philosophy. Paley, who stood almost alone for a long space of years as *the moral philosopher* of Cambridge, was clearly of the empirical school, and accordingly advocated, with some peculiarities of his own, the sensational theory of ethics, that which grounds all virtue upon utility. The reaction against this school has now most decidedly set in. Very plain intimations of it appeared as far back as the year 1834, when Professor Sedgwick published his admirable Discourse

¹ *Vide* Professor Lushington's Inaugural Lecture at Glasgow.

on the studies of the University, and attacked the philosophy of Locke and of Paley, both in their principles and in their effects. "The Essay on the Human Understanding," he remarks, "produced a chilling effect on the philosophical writings of the last century, and many a cold and beggarly system of psychology was sent into the world by authors of the school of Locke, pretending, at least, to start from his principles, and to build on his foundation. It is to the entire domination his Essay had once established in our university, that we may perhaps attribute all that is faulty in the moral philosophy of Paley." Again, the same author, speaking more particularly of the philosophy of Paley, sums up his many lucid remarks in the following striking and emphatic words:—"Lastly, we may, I think, assert, both on reason and experience, that wherever the utilitarian system is generally accepted, made the subject of *a priori* reasoning, and carried, through the influence of popular writings, into practical effect, it will be found to result in effects most pestilent to the honour and happiness of man."

These are by no means the only indirect evidences, which might be adduced, of a nascent idealistic school in the university of Cambridge. It seems almost certain, that the reaction against the excessive pursuit of physical science, the growing sympathy with the most lofty-minded of the German philosophical writers, the profound, and, at the same time, elegant reflections upon spiritual truth, which for some time past has characterised many of the sons of that university, *must* give rise to a spiritual

philosophy which, like that of the seventeenth century, *may* play an important part in the future literature of our country.”¹

It is, however, in the writings of Professor Whewell that we are to look for some of the more marked characteristics of the modern Cambridge metaphysics. The influence of the Scottish and German philosophy are there almost equally visible, but both receive a colouring from a mind deeply imbued with physical science, and accustomed to walk amongst the highest regions of mathematical investigation. The great work in which Dr Whewell has embodied his metaphysical opinions is that entitled, “The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences,” the object of which is to show the foundation principles of all scientific research. This work is divided in two parts, the former of which treats of *ideas*, and the latter of *knowledge*. In pursuing the investigation of our ideas, Dr Whewell has closely followed some of the principal results of the Kantian philosophy. In imitation of Kant, for example, he shows, that in all our notions we have to distinguish the *matter* and the *form*, the matter coming through the senses, the form being the mould in which this matter is shaped by the mind itself.² Time and space, which, with Kant, are the two categories of sensation, are viewed

¹ It should not be omitted, that the writings of Coleridge have probably been the main exciting cause of this reaction. Several of the Cambridge theological writers, such as Julius Charles Hare and others, have clearly imbibed largely of the spirit of those writings.

² Aphorisms vi. viii. ; also vol. i. p. 29.

by him virtually in the same light, namely, as the two necessary *conceptions*, under which all our sense-perceptions appear.¹ A sensation itself he regards as the bare impression of an external object upon the mind ; the *form* under which that sensation is viewed he terms an *idea*.² Those ideas which are the ground-forms of our knowledge, such as time, space, cause, are called *fundamental* ; secondary ideas arising from them, such as length and breadth, number and succession, are termed *ideal conceptions*.³ In all this strain of thinking the philosophical student will not fail to see not merely a tendency to, but a decided appropriation of, some of the most valuable parts of the Kantian metaphysics.

Whilst, however, we discern, on the one hand, the influence of Germany, there are several points, on the other, in which the results of the Scottish metaphysics are very manifest. One of the principal of these is the adoption of the muscular-tactual sense, as developed by Brown ; a theory which Dr Whewell, in fact, not only adopts, but carries out still further, so as to account for many of the phenomena of vision, as well as those of resistance.⁴ In the general phraseology of the work, indeed, as well as in some of the theories it upholds, we plainly see that the writings of Reid, Stewart, and Brown, have had, perhaps imperceptibly, no inconsiderable influence upon the mind of the author.

¹ Aphor. xx. to xxx.
Vol. i. p. 36, *et seq.*

² Vol. i. p. 25, *et seq.*

⁴ Book iii. chap. v.

Without entering more minutely, however, into the peculiar features of the elaborate treatise before us, we must endeavour to show in what manner it may be regarded as presenting a very important step in the transition, which philosophy is now undergoing, from the sensationalist to the idealistic tendency. The principal points where this transition process is exhibited in the work before us are the following.

1. In the broad distinction laid down between sensations and ideas; a distinction, in which (unlike that of Locke, Mill, and many others) the latter are shown to have no direct dependence upon the former, but an *a priori* existence of their own, as original forms or categories of the understanding.

2. In the opposition that is pointed out between necessary and contingent truth, the one being grounded in experience, the other in the mind's own primitive constitution.¹

3. In the doctrine propounded concerning time and space as being the forms of all our perceptions, and existing consequently in the mind previous to our first sensations.

4. In the explanation that is offered of the notion of causation, as the fundamental idea, on which the mechanical sciences are founded, and not an effect of habit or association.

5. In the view which is taken of human knowledge

¹ For a fuller account of this point, see our remarks on Mill's "Logic."

generally, as resulting from the appropriate combination within the mind of facts and ideas.

Dr Whewell's work, beside its own intrinsic excellence, has likewise the merit of being the first in our own country in which the logic of induction has been fully and fairly discussed. Since its appearance, indeed, it has met with a formidable rival in Mr Mill's "System of Logic," but by no means yields to it, as it appears to us, either in the accuracy of views, depth of analysis, or copiousness of examples. Presumptuous as it may seem, to judge between two works of such unquestionable merit, nay, which may be both viewed as the highest efforts of the human mind upon these subjects, we cannot forbear expressing our belief, that Mr Mill, biassed by the psychology he has inherited almost by birth, has neglected some of the most important subjective elements in the formation of our simple and original conceptions, which elements the Cambridge philosopher has seized often with great clearness, and illustrated with great power.

In brief, Dr Whewell, though an ardent lover of mathematical and physical science, has never allowed the earnest pursuit of objective knowledge to obscure the necessity of investigating the subjective grounds, on which these pursuits ultimately repose. He has boldly grappled with the metaphysical conceptions which lie at the basis of science, overturned the sensationalism which too often has attached itself to the physical inquirer, shown with admirable clearness the dependence of all objective

knowledge upon subjective ideas, and raised, we trust, an effective barrier against the recurrence of those abuses, to which the Baconian principles have so often been exposed. Respecting Dr Whewell as a moralist we would rather observe an *unassenting* silence. As his work on morals does not profess to contain a full discussion of the principles of ethical philosophy, we pass it by with the hope, that when he undertakes to develop them, the subject will have assumed a more definite form, than it appears at present to have assumed in his mind. We must pass on, however, to the consideration of that more decisive influence, which the German philosophy is at present exerting on our country.

(B.) GERMANO-ENGLISH METAPHYSICIANS.

The voluminous and profound school of German philosophy, though somewhat repulsive in its first aspect, could not in the nature of things remain shut up within the limits of the German States. Philosophical thinking, in this as in most other cases, has pursued its course irrespective of all national barriers, and has already found its way into England, France, and America. Amongst our own countrymen, Sir James Mackintosh, whilst in India, obtained some little insight into this philosophy, although he never gave the results of his investigations on it (which we imagine were not very profound) to the world. The first of our English thinkers, as far as we know, who entered with real enthusiasm into the subject, and clothed the

thoughts of German philosophical writers in the English dress, was Coleridge. Much of the revival, which spiritualism has more recently experienced amongst us, is probably due to the zeal and eloquence, with which that extraordinary man advocated his doctrines of modern Platonism, doctrines to which he was manifestly led by his ardent study of German philosophy.

In France the modern German idealism has found a still more energetic and efficient champion in M. Cousin, the effects of whose writings upon philosophy generally are probably but now in their infancy. America, too, has recently been arousing herself from the dream of practical utilitarianism, and giving birth to a school of philosophy (grounded chiefly upon the writings of Cousin) which bids fair to prove as productive, though not certainly as profound, as the European sources from which it springs. Amongst these, George Ripley and Dr Henry have done good service by presenting their country with many excellent translations from the French eclectic writers, which have also found their way into this kingdom. H. P. Tappan of New York has re-argued the question of the freedom of the will, in opposition to the rigid conclusions of Jonathan Edwards, and given a very lucid compendium of logic on the principles of the new philosophy. The names of Emerson, Brownson, and Parker are well known through various of their productions, which have been reprinted in England, as belonging to the school of American Transcend-

dentalism; while a monthly publication, termed "*The Dial*," the organ of this party, has until lately brought over to us an exhibition of the progress which idealistic principles are making upon the Western Continent. With such seeds of idealism scattered amongst us from so many different quarters, all originating primarily from the philosophy of Germany, it were unreasonable not to look for some decided effect upon our own national habits of thinking.

In adverting to the philosophy of England, which bears the German stamp upon it, almost every one will immediately recall the name of Thomas Carlyle, a name which stands first and foremost among the idealistic writers of our age. In bringing the works of Carlyle for a moment before our attention, we shall not give any opinion respecting his *theological* sentiments, inasmuch as these lie quite beyond our beat, and have to be judged of before another tribunal, beside that of *a priori* reasoning. Neither do we wish to track his philosophical views to the German originals, from which it is unquestionable that many of them have sprung. In the case of a writer so powerful, so original, and so full of native fire and genius, it is a thankless task at best to assign a foreign paternity to the burning thoughts, that we find scattered with no sparing hand almost through every page. That Mr Carlyle has learned much truth, and added much inspiration to the force of his genius from the literature and philosophy of Germany, he would himself be among the first to

own; but his sentiments have not been so much borrowed from these sources, as inspired from them: he has used these philosophers as his familiar companions, rather than as his masters; and instead of sitting at their feet, we should rather say "that his soul has burned within him, as he has walked with them by the way."

It is in vain that we open the volumes, which have come from the pen of this fertile writer, in order to find there a *system* of philosophy; and yet his philosophical opinions may be traced there with a clearness and a certainty which leave no room either for misunderstanding or doubt. The great and prominent feature of all his writings is a marked contempt for the shallow objective sensationalism of the age we live in; and an earnest struggle for the re-establishment of an exalted and a spiritual philosophy. He has seen clearly and felt deeply, that the objective element in our knowledge is threatening to absorb everything else; that our literature, our science, our laws, morals, politics, and religion, are all tainted with this tendency; and he considers it to be his mission to lift up the voice like a trumpet, in order to warn the age of its folly and its danger. The idea of *self*, the mind, the real man, he considers as having degenerated almost into that of a living machine, hardly separated by a boundary line from nature in her visible organization; the idea of the eternal, the infinite, the divine, has become too often the artificial God of a sect or party; it is his aim, therefore, to hold up these

two fundamental thoughts of humanity again to our view, to show their great reality, and to infuse by this means into the philosophy and feeling of the age precisely *the two elements*, which it has either marred or lost. Whatever be the subject on which he writes (and he writes more or less upon nearly all), this aim is never lost sight of, nay, appears to be the great ruling thought around which the others cluster as their central point. If he comes upon morals, with what infinite scorn is it that he scouts and tramples upon "the Gospel according to Jeremy Bentham;" with what intensity does he point out as existing in God the reality of an eternal justice, and in man the reality of an eternal obligation, that must break down every passion and every selfish interest until it be accomplished. If he enters the wide field of law and politics, you see him impatiently pushing aside all the clever arithmetic of law-makers and statesmen, and grasping at once the broad principle that man is divine, that he exists here under great spiritual laws, and that it is in vain to reckon up profit and loss, vain to number ships and soldiers, vain to balance parties and interests, while the great duties between man and man, and between man and God, are trodden as an unholy thing in the dust.

In his joyous rambles through the regions of elegant literature and poesy, there are the same tendencies apparent, the same purposes kept in view. "The pretty story-telling Walter Scott," that required no thought to read him, that spoke not to

the inner soul of man, that described only the visible, and had no eye for the invisible world, finds but little favour in the stern hands of our spiritualist. The snarling impious Byron, the poet of misanthropy, and earthly passion, is hardly pitied and heartily despised. On the contrary, Burns, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and more than all, Goethe, sing music to his inmost spirit, and seem to revive the long-silent strains of Shakespeare, of Dante, and of Homer.

Much would we say of Carlyle's earnest appeals on the religion of the age, were we not afraid to venture into so fruitful and, we might almost say, so dangerous a subject; but here, too, we find him uttering his lamentations or his anathemas against the hollow-hearted formalism of Christendom, against the *sham*-worship which has taken the place of the undaunted faith and burning love of the prophets and apostles of God. Without distinction of name, of rank, or of popular favour, he tears the mask from the features of hypocrisy, and places again and again, in no very flattering contrast, the pompous, easy, formal, soulless worship that is seen in many a Christian temple, with the Hindoo, the Mohammedan, or even the untutored Indian, who sees God in everything he sees, and hears him in everything he hears. "Will you ever be calling heathenism a lie, worthy of damnation, which leads its devotee to consecrate all upon its altars, and with a wonder, which transcends all your logic, bows before some idol of nature; while those who

with sleepy heads and lifeless spirits meet in a framed house, and go over a different set of forms, are the only elect of God? Clear thy mind of cant! Does not God look at the heart?" With a truly Platonic contempt for the material, and as ardent a love for the intellectual, the ideal, the Divine, our author wanders through all the regions of literature, of morals, of religion, of the habits, customs, laws, and institutions of our day, chastising all that is shallow and insincere, and pleading for everything that is earnest and true in human life.

With such tendencies of mind, it is not difficult to see of what nature must be his philosophy. The Scottish metaphysics he *respects* as being in its day a powerful protest against sensationalism; but it is in the German idealism that he finds his true element. There he meets with men who strive to look through the world of phenomena into that of absolute reality; there, at length, he finds the world of matter assigned to its true place of inferior dignity, and the absolute, the real, the essential, the eternal, raised to its lofty position in the contemplation of the intellect, and the affections of the heart.

Had Carlyle, like his German contemporaries, fashioned his philosophy into a system, and sent it into the world all bristling with repulsive words and formulas, he might have been read by a few, and lived and died to the mass unknown. Instead of this, however, he has rushed into every subject

of popular interest, cast around his thoughts the drapery of bold poetic imagery, and thus succeeded in carrying his philosophy into a thousand avenues, which it had otherwise never reached. That he will make many feeble imitators is a matter of certain prediction, nay, already of actual experience; that he will prove a stumbling-block to many sceptical minds, who have an eye for his boldness but no heart for his spiritualism, is equally certain; but, assuredly, we have no writer, who is so adapted to stem the current of empiricism, and to hurl defiance at the noisy and shallow pretensions of the materialistic or sensational systems of the age; none who holds so important a place in the transition, which is now effecting, from the degenerated philosophy of Locke to a new, and, we trust, a rational idealism. For our own part we are thankful that Carlyle has lived, thought, and written; he may scandalise the few, as every bold thinker will, but the world in the end will be the better; it will be a truer and an honester world for his life and his labours. That he should have involved himself in certain aberrations of philosophy and good sense is not to be wondered at. No man ever wrote so earnestly on one side of a question without doing so. Disgusted with formalism, he has shown an inclination to make sincerity the *whole* test of moral greatness. He *tends* to make Paul the persecutor as elevated a hero as Paul the apostle. He *tends* to sink all consideration of the object towards which our zeal is directed, in the glory of the zeal itself. Such a principle, if

there be any distinction between truth and untruth in the world, we must learn to repudiate ; but let us retain the deep impression of the sentiment he so earnestly labours to inculcate,—that all our outward life is destitute of moral excellence, while the soul does not act with fervour and sincerity and godly fear within.

The influence of Carlyle's writings, and of the German philosophy generally, is already becoming apparent in several different quarters. In America they have operated powerfully, especially upon the numerous body of Unitarian Christians who exist there, turning that system of Christianity, which sprung originally from a sensational philosophy, into a far more profound and a far more spiritualised system of religious rationalism. The same effect is visible, though not to the same extent, in our own country. The influence of the German philosophy is visible among the more deep-thinking of the Unitarians ; it is visible in a new and increasing party in the Established Church, that usually denominated Young England ; it is visible to a certain degree, even among those reputed to be most rigidly attached to their symbols. There can be little doubt, indeed, but that theology, without, we trust, giving up any of its distinctive features, is about to be the medium for popularising and spreading some of the main principles of an idealistic philosophy.

In the meantime, there are some other minor manifestations of sympathy with the present eclectic philosophy of France, springing, too, in some cases,

from sources where it was least to be expected. Any one may satisfy himself of this by directing his attention to a series of works published by that promoter of elegant typography, William Pickering, termed "Small books on great subjects." In one of these little treatises, entitled "Philosophical Theories and Philosophical Experience," there is a new psychological classification of our mental phenomena, into—I. Material and Animal Functions, those subjected to bodily change; and II. Spiritual and Unchanging Functions. In another of them, written by John Barlow, M.A., of the Royal Society, a professed physiologist, there is a deduction of man's spirituality and immortality from the power of the will: in fact, both these treatises are strongly characterised by their giving prominence to the notion and the power of *self*, and assigning it its due place in their metaphysical philosophy. We might mention also, a treatise of Isaac Preston Cory, Esq., on Metaphysical Enquiry, and another on Logic and the Laws of Thought, by Rev. Wm. Thomson, each of which gives a pleasing instance of the growing tendency, which now exists, to the cultivation of the abstract and metaphysical sciences. The latest manifestation of the now rising school of English spiritualism, is to be found in the Hunterian Oration, delivered by J. H. Green, Esq., in February 1847, entitled "Mental Dynamics, or Groundwork of a Professional Education." The author has given in the Appendix, a highly interesting classification of the human faculties, and

pointed out with great clearness, the principle of self-consciousness—of the me regarded in the light of subject or noumenon—as the only scientific basis of a true philosophy both of mind and morals. What the hopes of the next generation may be we do not now inquire; but we shall, perhaps, find an opportunity of throwing out a few speculations on this subject, when we come to speak of the *tendencies* of the speculative philosophy of the nineteenth century.

The modern idealism of France might, perhaps, naturally be looked for under this chapter; but, as it has assumed the eclectic form, we reserve it for a separate consideration.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN SCEPTICISM.

SECT. I.—*Modern Scepticism generally— In England.*

THE interest that attends the history of philosophy in any age, will always attach itself mainly to the two opposed schools of sensationalism and idealism. From them originate most of the deeper problems upon which the mind of man delights to dwell, and to their efforts we naturally look, to have those problems clearly solved. It is, however, one of the most universal failings of humanity, to run into extremes in different directions. Hardly is the necessity realised of investigating closely the facts of sensation, than the philosopher, absorbed in this object, and overwhelmed, perhaps, with the variety, magnitude, and number of the phenomena presented, makes sensation the basis of every mental state, and, in the same proportion, disparages the value of all the other faculties.

But the opposite extreme is equally natural. Reason, as all admit, is the noblest part of man, for it regulates and guides all the rest. Once, then,

let the metaphysician become wrapped in the contemplation of its grandeur, and he will, in all probability, begin forthwith to detract from the value of the senses, to look with contempt upon empirical knowledge, and thus to lose sight of one, at least, of the most fertile sources of our ideas.

The abuses both of sensationalism and idealism have been, we trust, already sufficiently portrayed. In the former case, we have seen them leading to egotism in morals, atheism in religion, and materialism in philosophy; in the latter case, they have given rise successively to religious rationalism, to fatalism, and ultimately, to complete pantheism. Now the logical deduction of false results in any philosophical system, always betrays a falsity in one or more of the fundamental data from which they are evolved. The error, it is true, may be invisible; yet, if such conclusions actually clash with the indisputable facts of daily experience, we may be sure that it is lurking somewhere in the foundations. The mind, indeed, which is totally given up to system, will admit many a startling conclusion, nay, perhaps, many a contradictory one, without any difficulty. Full of confidence in the principles it has adopted, it is borne along with the stream of argument to all their results; and should insoluble difficulties arise, it leaves them, as points which transcend the powers of the human mind to unravel or to comprehend. There is a limit, however, at which the force of system stops, and beyond which it cannot impose upon human credulity; and when

this limit is arrived at, not only does the mind refuse to advance any further, but, system being once found in error, a flood of suspicion pours itself even over those conclusions which had been heretofore most firmly believed. Such is the origin of scepticism, which, in its first aspect, is really nothing more than the common sense of mankind rising in rebellion against the authority of the current philosophy of the age.

The proper office of scepticism is to act as a check or drag upon the too rapid progress of all dogmatical systems. As such, it has been eminently beneficial in every age; nay, has formed an indispensable movement in the advancement of speculative science. It dispossesses the mind of man of its excessive love of system, pulls down its blind attachment to authority, and moves out of the path some of the greatest obstacles which oppose the investigation of truth. Never, perhaps, was there a philosophical system more widely diffused, more deeply inwrought into the belief of mankind, and more sternly contended for, than that of Aristotle. The ideal theory of human knowledge, which originated there, was for ages looked upon as possessing authority almost amounting to axiomatic certainty; and it must have appeared little less than madness to attack a belief so universal, and established, in all appearance, for endless perpetuity. The instrument, however, by which this was overthrown, was the scepticism of Hume. It was he who, regardless of consequences, carried the prin-

ciples in question to their furthest results, showed that they involved in them universal unbelief, and thus gave them virtually their first refutation. The scepticism of Hume, which may be called a "*reductio ad absurdum*," aimed against the ideal system, necessitated a thorough reconsideration of the very first elements of human knowledge, and was instrumental in suggesting, both to Kant and to Reid, the primary idea of a philosophy based upon sounder principles.

Had scepticism been content to keep within its proper limits, and quietly to perform the office assigned to it, it would have ever appeared in the light of a friend and benefactor; but, not content with pronouncing the actually existing systems to be in error, it often seeks to advance still further, and affirms that no possible system of philosophy can develop *any truth whatever* with absolute certainty. Here, then, having resisted and exposed the errors of others, it falls itself into the most startling errors of all, and having proffered a blessing with one hand, withdraws it with the other.

Now, in taking a general view of scepticism, we must point out as clearly as possible the different aspects which it assumes, since in doing this we shall be the better able to estimate the amount of influence it is now exerting in our own country. Scepticism, then, regarded generically, may be divided into three subordinate species, which we may term *absolute* scepticism, *authoritative* scepticism and the scepticism of *ignorance*.

1. By absolute scepticism we mean, a disposition of mind to admit nothing as absolutely true, accompanied with a formal denial of the certainty of any branch of human knowledge. This species of scepticism, in the very nature of things, must be rare, and when it does appear, must be altogether limited to the more thinking classes of mankind. The natural and healthy state of the human mind is one of *belief*. We instinctively give credit to our senses, our memory, our reason, our moral sentiments; and ere distrust in any of them is experienced, a considerable process of thinking and of reasoning must have passed through the intellect. Ordinarily speaking, men have neither the leisure nor the taste to sit down and investigate the foundations of knowledge, and, consequently, they give themselves up, without any hesitation, to their natural and instinctive beliefs. It is only here and there, in men of deep reflection—men who have gone, or imagined that they have gone, to the very bottom of those foundations—that any idea is entertained of the absolute uncertainty of the whole superstructure.

The natural history of this species of scepticism may be briefly portrayed in the following manner. We will suppose a man, vigorous in his natural capacities, earnest in his purposes, and eagerly devoted to the investigation of truth. Too penetrating to be imposed upon by vulgar modes of thinking—too independent to admit, without testing, the common opinions of those around him—he scatters the faith

of his childhood to the winds, and seeks to re-cast, for his own satisfaction, the primary elements of his real philosophical belief. In doing so, he soon finds himself involved in questions of the most intricate nature. The more easy and superficial problems are spurned with contempt; he wants to go at once to *first principles*, and to convince himself that everything *there* is firm and stable. To his grief and astonishment, however, he finds that those fundamental questions, upon which everything else must rest, are among the most difficult, both of comprehension and of proof. The greatest minds of former ages, he discovers, have in this region perpetually lost their way; and he sees nought in prospect but a conflict of opinions, as endless as it must be unsatisfactory. In his perplexity, he appeals to the great dogmatical systems which have had the chief reputation in the world; he tracks the history of them from Plato down to Kant; and the probable consequence is, that the arguments of the one party completely neutralise those of the other. In this painful position, the fearful question begins to dawn upon his mind,—Is there such a thing as truth at all? Can we have a certainty upon anything? Are we not the sport of an ignorance which dazzles only to delude us with the hope of absolute truth? Such a thought, once entertained, acts like a spell upon all his researches, and throws suspicion over every argument. It gains force from the very fact, that it seems so plainly to unfold the causes from which the contests and disagreements

of philosophy have arisen. A disgust at all dogmatism next ensues; and at length he determines to rest in the conviction that each man must see truth for himself alone, because absolute truth lies entirely beyond the reach of the human faculties.

This disposition to universal unbelief, then, being once fixed in the mind, it soon manifests itself upon almost every subject that lies open to human research. It begins, of course, by attacking the ground-principles of philosophical truth,—in one breath denying the certain existence of the material world, and in another, that of the spiritual; thus leaving, ultimately, nought but a bundle of impressions and ideas. Next, it loosens the strong bands of moral obligation. Virtue to it is either a nonentity, or but another name for that which produces pleasure; and vice is a similar cipher, except it be that which produces pain; but as to the word *duty*, it has absolutely no meaning, since no *obligation* can be shown why I should pursue happiness as my aim any more than misery. Next, the foundations of man's natural religion fall under its stroke. Men may have (grants the sceptic) each one for himself, *the idea* of God, and this idea may prove very beneficial in directing or constraining his actions; but who is to prove that objective reality is to be attached to it? In a word, once let confidence be shaken in the veracity of our natural faculties, and there is not a buttress left to support any portion of the edifice of truth.

Now the philosophical error, which lurks in the

principle of absolute scepticism, is by no means difficult to discover and expose; in fact, as a system, it carries within itself its own refutation. The sceptic distrusts the veracity of man's natural faculties; but by what means, we would ask him, has he arrived at this, his startling conclusion? Of course, by the *use* of his faculties—the very faculties which he distrusts. But if our reason is ever leading us astray in other matters, and if it *never* suffers us to attain certainty, then why may it not have led the sceptic himself astray? or on what ground can he affirm the certainty of the conclusion to which he has arrived? The sceptic, above all men, is fond of employing the power of reasoning, in order to pull down the systems which exist around him; but if he has already undermined the veracity of reason itself, why does he believe his own arguments? Why not take for granted, that he is as far wrong in pulling down as others may have been in building up? For an absolute sceptic to argue at all is a piece of folly, only second to the folly of those who argue with him. If there is no credence to be given to the working of our intellectual powers, the former, for consistency's sake, might spare himself the trouble of using them against the belief of his neighbours; and the latter might, with equal propriety, avoid the useless task of arguing with one, who professedly has no faith in argument. The sceptic, in fact, writes at once his own defence and his own reply: he may make out the best possible case against his opponents; but then who, of all those whom he convinces of the

futility of human reason generally, will be likely to pay any respect to his own application of it? The only rational effect of scepticism, when it is carried to this length, is to throw aside all the weapons of philosophy together, and let the world quietly go on as it does, without either encouragement or restraint. In other words, the influence of it, rationally considered, is equal to *zero*.

If this be the case, then, it might be said, why is it worth while to oppose a sceptical system, which *rationally* has no influence whatever for good or for evil? We answer, because men will make an *irrational* use of it, and we wish to cut off the plea which it affords them for doing or thinking what is evil. The mere assertion of sceptical principles in the abstract, is of extremely little consequence, as they exert in this way hardly any perceptible influence upon the conduct of any one; but, unfortunately, there is ever a sufficiency of half-ignorant minds, who, without having depth enough to see the inconclusiveness of scepticism *as a whole*, are very ready to catch at the notion of the universal uncertainty of all human knowledge, and to urge it in opposition to everything that is good or great, whether in religion, morals, or philosophy. Thus the loss of confidence in the powers of the mind soon makes itself felt, more or less, in every department of science; it represses exertion, fosters a contempt for all systematic truth, weakens the ties of moral obligation, and tends to the degeneracy, rather than to any advancement of the human race.

Absolute scepticism, as now explained, has fortu-

nately, at present, no decided representative in this country. Its last great advocate was David Hume, who for a time gave origin and support to a class of petty unbelievers, that, without entering into the depth of his argument, much less seeing its self-refutation, learned, notwithstanding, to sneer at evidence and despise truth. This spirit was arrested, at least to some extent, by Reid, and others of like views, who combated, step by step, so earnestly for the reality of our knowledge, that a sweeping unbelief has not as yet, during the present century, made its re-appearance in this Island. Many, it is true, are the different faiths now in vogue throughout the community ; but amongst these we hardly find one, the principle of which is to have no faith at all. We go on, therefore, to describe—

2. The scepticism which bases itself upon *authority*.

It is possible to deny the capability of the human mind to gain absolute knowledge for itself, without denying the fact that such knowledge is actually in our possession. If, *e. g.*, we supposed truth to be infused into us miraculously, we might in this way avoid the sweeping conclusion, that there is no such thing as truth at all cognisable to man, whilst at the same time we might regard the self-acquisition of it as altogether impracticable. Now this exactly describes the opinions of many, who look upon tradition or the scriptures as the only source of absolute truth, and who, standing upon the platform of revelation, scout at the very notion of philosophy.

The system of opinions to which we now refer, is somewhat of the following kind. Man, whatever he might have been in his first creation, is now naturally blind and foolish ; his reason is perverted ; his moral nature overturned ; and he is thus rendered totally unfit for the great office of acquiring knowledge, with any perfect degree of certainty. Upon this state of helpless darkness the light of revelation dawns ; the shadows of ignorance gradually disperse ; and a source is opened from which we may at length gain fixed and eternal truth—an acquisition otherwise impossible. Let it be remembered that the question here is by no means, whether or no revelation unfolds to us truths which could not have been attained by us in any other way : this is admitted by all who hold the special inspiration of the Bible. The question is, whether *all moral truth* must be derived from thence, or whether some absolute knowledge cannot be attained by man, quite independent of supernatural assistance. Those who hold revelation to be the only source of certain knowledge to man, would, no doubt, start at being ranked under the title of sceptics, and yet, in truth, this principle contains the germ of a scepticism, under which both religion and philosophy would soon be seen to expire.

Let us weigh this question a little. The human faculties, it is urged, are perverted : there is no confidence to be placed in them : they lead us astray at every step. How then, we ask, can we be ever assured that the revelation, to which we apply for

light, is a true one? The veracity of it, as far as our convictions go, *must* rest upon a process of reasoning. We must collect evidence; we must decide what is valid as evidence, and what is not; and then from this we must draw our inference respecting the truth of the revelation itself. What, then, are the instruments by which all these processes are carried on, and by which the ultimate conclusion is at length arrived at? Of course our own reasoning faculties. But these faculties are said to be fallacious: why, then, may they not have failed us in this particular argument? If we cannot trust to their decisions *generally*, what certainty is there in that revelation, upon the truth of which they alone can decide?

The argument becomes still stronger, when we pass from the question of revelation to that of the being of God. Without this truth already established, inspiration is a word without any meaning whatever. But how is it established, except by the inferences of our own reason? To undermine the authority of reason, therefore, is to undermine that of revelation as well; once destroy the validity of the subjective world within, and there can be no longer a certainty left in any objective reality. The scepticism, therefore, which builds itself up upon authority, is in its nature inconclusive. It holds some truths as absolutely sure; but if it could only expand its own principles to their legitimate extent, it would discover that the knowledge which it allows is no more certain than that which

it rejects ; nay, that the truth of the one is indissolubly connected with the truth of the other.

Whatever scepticism now exists in England is, we imagine, nearly all of this kind. The philosophic spirit is with us, for the most part, at a low ebb, whilst the religious is developing itself often with great intensity. The effect of this is to depress the value of metaphysical truth, and to hold up that of revelation as altogether independent of it. Our ordinary religious literature abounds in crude assertions of this nature. Many of those who write for the religious public, conscious that they never thought themselves clear upon any of the first principles of truth, suppose that no one else has ; conscious that their own reason is inconclusive in its researches, they stamp the whole reason of mankind as equally so ; assured that their own knowledge is taken entirely upon trust from tradition or the Scriptures, they suppose that all men must take theirs from the same source. Men who have been brought up to a certain belief, and whose minds have never broken away from the blind but confiding faith of their infancy, have not, in many instances, the slightest idea of the amount or the kind of evidence, which would be necessary to prove the truth of Christianity to a mind without any faith at all. Their own belief is in no sense whatever the result of evidence, but simply a matter of education ; and consequently it is no wonder if they commit mistakes with respect to the *real* evidence upon which such knowledge must ultimately rest. This contempt of

philosophy, into which the religious world so frequently falls, we feel convinced, is extremely detrimental to the best interests of religious truth. While it may here and there deter a solitary mind from involving itself in the web of human sophistry, it is, on the contrary, infusing into many other minds strong prejudices against admitting the full claims of revelation, and weakening the evidences of it in the minds of those who do.

It is a fact, not to be disputed, that some of the most enlightened minds of the day have nurtured a secret opposition to the doctrines of Christianity, owing to the intellectual intolerance of its abettors. And whilst such intolerance lasts, can it possibly be otherwise? Is not every mind *impelled* to the admission of all truth, the evidence of which it has itself thoroughly evolved? Did not the same God, which speaks in revelation, create the powers of the human spirit? and when Christianity is made to contradict and repel the natural results of our own faculties, or the utterances of our moral nature, yea, to deny the certainty of that upon which its own evidence rests, is it to be wondered at, that the prejudices of men should be aroused and their assent refused? We regard the believer, who would raise the value of religion by invalidating the due authority of human reason, as committing an error which in time must prove fatal to his own belief. To mention any particular works, in which this species of scepticism is discoverable, would be a task more invidious than useful; we merely point out the gen-

eral fact, that such a method of viewing things is but too common in our own country, and shall rest content with having thus briefly but firmly recorded our protest against it.

3. There is yet a third species of scepticism claiming our attention, to which we have given the name of the "scepticism of ignorance." This is peculiar to the less educated and more unthinking portion of mankind. Men, in general, as we have already remarked, impose a most implicit reliance upon the evidence of their senses and their faculties, which it is almost impossible for anything to shake. But there lie, beyond these, certain other great principles of belief, absolutely necessary to the repose and well-being of the human mind, the confidence in which varies, even amongst the larger masses of mankind, in different ages and in different countries.

Man requires faith in moral obligation, faith in God, faith in immortality ; and this faith cannot be shaken without at the same time endangering the very framework of human society. Faith in these great objects, it is true, always forms a constituent part of the *religion* of the age, so that want of belief in them might be termed *religious* scepticism, with which we have at present nothing to do ; but so far as unbelief touches the great fundamental principles of *natural* religion, in so far it is strictly speaking a philosophical, as well as a religious scepticism. There have been in the history of the world eras of intense faith as well as eras of general

unbelief upon these matters ; and it is the latter which we now note down as being characterised by the scepticism of ignorance. Current systems of belief (as was the case at the Reformation) will sometimes, from various causes, be shaken to their very centre, and then the community at large, sympathising in the work of destruction, are apt to go onwards with it, until they have left no temple of faith at all, in which they may worship. The next generation, accordingly, will grow up uneducated in any belief ; and, as the consequence of this, there will ensue a scepticism, not arising from any designed rejection of the spiritual faith of humanity, but from actual ignorance of what there is to believe in. Such to a great extent is the present state of France, and such a phenomenon, in some few instances, is seen in our own country, amongst those classes in which infidelity has most frequently taken up its abode. Happily, however, the diffusion of religious truth is too general in this country to admit the return (except, indeed, under most extraordinary circumstances) of another age of unbelief on the groundwork of man's natural religious sentiments. Of the three forms of scepticism we have mentioned, it is the second only from which anything is at present to be apprehended. For absolute scepticism we have too *little* philosophy, for the scepticism of ignorance we have too *much* religion ; with regard, however, to the scepticism of authority, we cannot conceal our fear, that should the theological odium pursue the spirit of philosophy with the

rancour which has too often been experienced, the result must in time prove fatal to the best interests of morality and of religion itself.

SECT. II.—*Modern Scepticism in France.*

The state of France, philosophically speaking, previous to the Revolution, has been already glanced at in the chapter which traces the history of sensationalism from Bacon down to modern times. We have seen, moreover, in another chapter, the main features, which French philosophy assumed, when the storm of the Revolution had passed away, and the comparative repose of the present century had commenced. The principles of Condillac, to whose writings the philosophic spirit seemed then to revert, we have noticed developing themselves successively in the physiological theories of Cabanis, in the metaphysics of Destutt de Tracy, and in the ethics of Volney.

The triumph of sensationalism, however, was not destined to be of long duration. Every extravagant and one-sided system contains, in fact, the seeds of its own overthrow, refuting its assumed data by means of the very consequences to which they lead. A striking example of this is seen in the materialism of France. The germ of the modern eclectic philosophy began to appear amongst the very triumphs of the materialistic school; and then commenced the struggle which has now brought about

the establishment of the former and the humiliation of the latter. The rise and progress of the eclectic philosophy, however, we have yet to exhibit; our present business is to track the footsteps of those different forms of *scepticism* which have arisen out of the contest.

The sensationalism of France was eminently *irreligious*. It delighted to scoff at all veneration for the Divine, to shock man's deepest sentiments of spiritual duty, and to substitute the indefinite idea of nature for that of the living God. The opponents of sensationalism, in the mean time, taking up another hypothesis, showed many indications of running into the opposite extreme of pantheism; the pantheistic principle being, in fact, equally fatal to the cultivation of an intelligent and efficient theism as the atheistic itself. The natural effect of these results upon many minds must be at once obvious. The utterance of man's natural reason, whether it flow in the sensational or ideal direction, being made to appear in plain contradiction to our indestructible religious sentiments, a distrust of the power of reason naturally followed, and confirmed scepticism, at length, made its appearance on the stage. This scepticism naturally placed itself *in opposition* to the irreligious tendency of the age; and as the other current philosophies seemed to undermine the authority of revelation in favour of reason, it, on the contrary, sought to *substitute* for reason the dictates of revelation. The most decisive philosophical scepticism of France, accordingly,

is that which bases itself upon *authority*, and aims at restoring the power and influence of the Church. To this school, then, we must now briefly revert.

The idea of appealing to Divine authority, and bolstering up the weakness of our natural reason by the cultivation of our faith, was widely diffused throughout France in the seventeenth century, by the writings of Huet, Bishop of Avranches. Huet may be regarded philosophically as the type and exemplar of the sceptics to whom we are now referring; and just in like manner as his views came forth from the rival schools of Gassendi and Descartes, so theirs have come from the similar contest of the materialists and eclectics of the nineteenth century.

The Count Joseph de Maistre (born 1753, died 1821) appears to have been one of the earliest of these modern theologico-philosophical writers—one, too, who, by the liveliness of his style, and the fertility of his fancy, no less than by the gloominess of his opinions, was well adapted to excite the attention, though not perhaps to gain the suffrages, of his countrymen. M. de Maistre, it is true, can hardly be called in strictness a philosophical writer at all, so entirely does the religious element preponderate over the metaphysical; yet, still, the whole tone of his *thinking* was such, as to prepare the way for future speculations, and still more decided attacks upon the validity of our natural faculties. There are three principal works in which he has explained his views upon human society and

human life. The first, published in the year 1819, is "On the Authority and Office of the Pope," the object of which work was to show, that his Holiness is a universal appeal for mankind, not only in spiritual matters, but in social and political also! The second is "On the Gallican Church, in relation to the Sovereign Pontiff." The third of these works, published posthumously in the year 1821, is entitled "Evenings at St Petersburg, or Conversations on the Temporal Government of Providence;" and it is here that he has, at once, given his meditations upon some of the most profound problems of human life, and proposed their solution.

The chief design of this work, as the title indicates, is to explain and to vindicate the conduct of Providence in relation to man in the present world. The lot of humanity is to suffer. From this none are exempt, although the wicked may in the long run suffer much more than the virtuous. The cause of this suffering M. de Maistre traces up very consecutively to original sin, taking the orthodox doctrine of the Church as his guide throughout the whole discussion. The means by which suffering is to be alleviated, he considers, are *prayer* and *merit*, the one securing us the constant favour of God, the other allowing the supererogatory righteousness of the saints to stand in the place of the deficient righteousness of the sinner. As theology, these sentiments, of course, must stand or fall according to the evidence of a purely authoritative nature, which can be shown for or against them. The de-

ceptiveness which runs through the whole work, *scientifically* speaking, arises from its being tacitly taken for granted, that there can be no valid philosophy of human nature which does not build itself up upon these foundations of inspired authority.

Far would we be from detracting ought from the inestimable value of revelation, or from denying the light which it casts upon human life ; but it does not follow from the truth or authority of revelation, that our reason must necessarily be weak and delusive in those subjects, which are not exclusively of a religious nature. There is assuredly enough of truth accessible to our minds in the intellectual and moral constitution of man wherewith to erect a system of philosophy, without the aid of revelation ; nay, upon the philosophical accuracy of our knowing faculties depends the value, even of revelation itself, which, like everything else, must be known through their medium. Whilst, therefore, we would willingly allow M. de Maistre, or any one else, the "liberty of prophesying," *i. e.*, of treating and arguing theology, as theology, upon its proper evidence, we cannot for a moment allow their right of intrenching themselves within the authority of the Church, and claiming a complete dictatorship over the philosophical or even the religious belief of mankind.

Such dogmatism it is the more necessary to resist, when we consider the conclusions which are drawn from it. As mankind exists, says our author, in the present world, only by suffering to

atone for the sin of the fall, he ought meekly to yield to every misery that is inflicted upon him for that purpose. Amongst other methods of exacting penance, God has appointed human power to restrain the license of the will, and this power, consequently, best answers its purpose when most stringent and severe. The duty of mankind, then, politically, is *object submission to authority*; and, as all authority delegated by God centres in the Pope, we must in everything yield implicit obedience to him, whatever he may inflict or command. When sentiments like these are systematically deduced,—sentiments which turn the world into a purgatory, man into a slave, and human life into gloom, it is, assuredly, high time to hold up either to ridicule or to reprobation the intolerant dogmatism in which they are nursed and cradled. Let a religionist dogmatise upon theology, speculatively considered, as much as he will; but never let him enslave mankind under the yoke, or on the plea of his crude opinions.

M. de Maistre, in addition to the works above mentioned, left also behind him a treatise entitled “*Examen de la Philosophie de Bacon*,” which was published in the year 1836. Seldom has a more trenchant and amusing polemick been carried on, than that which is contained within these two volumes. The author, exasperated against all philosophy, especially that of a sensational tendency, rushes forth against his opponent with an earnestness and a blind determination, which refuses to

recognise a single virtue or excellence attaching to the labours of his whole life. Take the following specimen of the satire he pours forth against the much admired style of the English philosopher.

“The style of Bacon,” he remarks (vol. i. p. 56,) “demonstrates his entire incapacity in all matters of philosophy. His style is, so to speak, material; he only exercises his mind upon forms, masses, and movements. His thought seems, if we may so say, to corporise itself, and to incorporate itself with the objects which alone occupy it. Every abstract expression, every word of the intelligence, which contemplates itself, displeases him. He refers to the schools every idea which does not present him with three dimensions. He has not in all his works a single word which addresses itself to the spirit: that of *nature*, or of essence, for example, chokes him; he would rather say *form*, because he can *see* it. The word prejudice is too subtile for his ear; he will say *idol*, because an idol is a statue of wood, of stone, or of metal, and has a form and a colour which one may touch, and which can be placed on a pedestal. Instead then of saying, national prejudices, corporal prejudices, &c; he will say idols of the forum, idols of the tribe, &c.; and those prejudices which we all more or less derive from character and habitude, he calls idols of the cave; for the interior of man is to him only a humid cavern, and the errors which distil from the vault, form concretions, just like stalactytes which hang from vulgar caverns.”

In the same sweeping style of criticism, combining at the same time many a stern truth with much exaggeration, the author exposes the methods, the aim, the defects, the weaknesses, both of the Baconian science and theology ; seeking to elevate his own theological scepticism upon the ruins of all science and all philosophy. Little as we can sympathise in the spirit of the author's system, it is highly interesting to peruse a polemical work of unquestionable ability, which meets the frequent dogmatism of the sensational school with a dogmatism equal to its own ; and opposes to the positiveness of positivism, a rough satirical energy, which pays back with fair interest all the ignorant sport which has been celebrated over the cloud-land of idealism.

The tendency shown by M. de Maistre to substitute faith for knowledge, and authority for philosophical investigation, in matters where such a substitution is not admissible, has been still further developed in more modern times by the Abbé de Lamennais. This remarkable writer was born in the year 1780, and must, therefore, have grown up amidst the very storms of the Revolution, with which his country was agitated. Being naturally of a deeply religious tendency of mind, he could not but look with sorrow, and even with bitterness of spirit, upon the almost universal reign of unbelief ; and it must have become early a ruling passion of his nature to recall his countrymen back to the exercise of a faith in God and immortality, to which they seemed to have grown insensible.

To aid him in this design, philosophy seemed entirely unavailing. As to sensationalism, it had already banished Deity from the temples erected to his honour, yea, if possible, from the temple of the universe, filled though it be with his own glory. The antagonist system of idealism, with its rationalistic spirit, likewise afforded but little that was satisfactory to an ardent mind, longing to rush with enthusiasm into the great question of human destiny, and to bring man's duty to God with intense earnestness and vivid perspicuity before its contemplation. Resigning, then, all trust in philosophy, he took his stand upon the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and proposed to find there the one principle of truth, from which all veracious human knowledge really proceeds. His work, entitled, "*Essai sur l'Indifférence en Matière de Religion*,"¹ was the first to rouse the public attention at once to himself, and to the theme of his passionate interest. It is the production of a mind disgusted with the sensualism and immorality of society, tired of the petty objects which were absorbing the attention of man-

¹ This work was first published about the year 1820, and has since gone through eight editions. The first part gives a classification of the different systems of religious indifference, and elaborately refutes them. The second part treats of the importance of religion in relation to the individual, to the state, and to God. The third part discusses the *method* of discovering the true religion; and the fourth proves this to be none other than Christianity. The whole work ends with a defence of the principles propounded against objectors; treating of the uncertainty of all philosophical research, and showing the only ground of certitude in the attainment of truth, that, namely, of Catholicism.

kind, and longing to gain peace and satisfaction in higher thoughts and nobler feelings. Such a satisfaction he finds in religion as held by the Church in all ages; and, therefore, neglecting every other avenue of knowledge as vain and fruitless, he will have this to be the one great and sole channel, through which God has communicated truth to his creatures below.

In order to establish this principle, the first requisite was, if possible, to *destroy* the confidence of humanity in philosophy, of whatever kind; and thus to compel them to take refuge in the ark of faith, against the universal deluge of absolute scepticism. He had to found, consequently, a philosophical scepticism, in order to establish the full authority of his theological dogmas. The scepticism which M. de Lamennais, with this object in view, maintained, if not profound, nevertheless is such as will be always sure to find a response in many minds.¹ His spirit of combined mysticism and misanthropy; his restless weariness at the delusive glare of human things; his contempt for the errors, the failings, the follies of mankind; his disappointment over the frailty of his own cherished hopes; all these will ever touch a chord of sympathy in many a heart which has struggled through the same experience, and arrived, perhaps, at the same results.

¹ To gain a complete view of the author's scepticism, consult especially Part 3, chap. i., "Du fondement de la certitude." Also, his "Défense de l'Essai sur l'Indifférence," at the close of the fourth part,

“What philosophy is there,” he exclaims, (we quote from one of his own critics, M. Damiron,) “whose pretensions are not all uncertain—all false? The senses deceive us, and attest nothing that can be termed clear, positive, complete. Feeling is not more sure; its object, although in appearance more evident and more simple, still, unless we are on our guard, is nothing less than a continual series of doubts and illusions. As to reason, it is to be still more suspected; for, first of all, it only operates upon the data furnished by the senses, or the feelings, (data upon which it cannot count); and, secondly, when the data are at hand, how does it operate? and what guarantee have we of the legitimacy of its procedure? What are we to think of the contradictory conclusions which it draws from the same principle? what of the identical ones it draws from different principles? What truth has it not denied? what error has it not established? In a word, must it not associate memory with all its operations?—and is memory a faithful ally? Reason, feeling, sense! — faculties without control! — vain means of gaining knowledge! — principles of error and incertitude! These it is, which deprive man of all hope of having either knowledge or faith from himself; there is for him no reality, either within or without; there is nothing, up to the very truth of his own existence, in which he has any right to believe, unless he has some other reason than his own private sentiment, and his own individual consciousness.”

M. de Lamennais, we thus see, has himself exactly fallen into the error, against which Plato makes Socrates affectionately warn his friends, in the conversation before his death. "Is it not lamentable, O Phædo," he says, "that when there is such a thing as true and valid reasons, capable of being comprehended, any one, from meeting with other reasons, some of which appear to be true, and some not, should fail to lay the blame upon his own unskilfulness, but at last should delight to thrust the error from his own shoulders upon reasoning itself, pass the rest of his life in hatred and contempt of it, and thus be deprived of the truth and knowledge that he seeks?"

It will not be necessary here to repeat the arguments by which this sweeping procedure of scepticism is met and refuted. We have already shown, that all absolute unbelief in the human faculties is answered by the very principle which it attempts to establish. If our senses and feelings, our memory, our reason, all are delusive, then every system of philosophy is placed *hors de combat*, and the reasoning which has established scepticism itself, may be just as erroneous as any other. Against all pretended unbelief of this kind, the common sense of mankind protests. That we may fall into many errors and many delusions through false reasoning, is unquestionable; but there are some points of knowledge, in which we feel that error is impossible. Here mankind have ever taken their stand; and equally vain is the attempt to shake

the confidence of humanity in that which bears the marks of necessity and universality, as it is to inspire a fear lest the solid basis of the everlasting mountains should crumble beneath our feet.

M. de Lamennais, however, having begun by establishing a philosophical scepticism, does not purpose, by any means, to leave us in doubt and perplexity as to what is true, and what false; on the contrary, he goes on to propound a theory of human knowledge, by which we may arrive at certainty upon all the great questions of human interest. The theory in question is that of *authority*—a theory which we must now attempt briefly to explain.¹

Man having no criterion of truth within himself *as an individual*, must find one in the universal assent of the whole race. The principle, “*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ad omnibus*,” taken in its widest acceptation, gives us the sole test of what is most assuredly true. This principle being settled, the next question is, *where* and *how* such universal assent is to be found. Opinions on all ordinary subjects within the range of human contemplation, have been perpetually changing. There have been different views advocated in art, in science, in philosophy, in almost every department of general knowledge; so that it is vain to look for common

¹ The principle of authority is advocated in different points of view, throughout the whole work. The chief passages in which it is maintained or illustrated, will be found in Part iii., chaps. 1, 3, 5, 8, and Part iv., chaps. 10, 12, 14, 16.

consent, and, consequently, for absolute truth, in any of these directions.

In religion, however, the case is different. Here there has been really but one system among the enlightened of mankind, from the earliest ages of the world to the present time. Revealed at three different epochs, it has not changed its essence in passing from one age into another, but only varied its form. The religion of the Patriarch, of the Jew, of the Christian, is really one and the same ; and the truth which it contains has gradually been developing itself, with greater clearness, from one dispensation to another. The existence of false religion is no obstacle against this view of the case. False religion is simply a defective view of truth ; while true religion, amidst all its various developments, and all its corruptions, has ever retained its fundamental unity. Here, therefore, we are to look in order to find THE TRUTH—that, namely, which rests upon the authority of the whole world, from its creation to the present hour, and which proceeded originally from the direct intervention of God himself.¹

Now the depository of truth, which was formerly vested in the patriarch, and in the Jewish priest, in the present day is vested in the Catholic Church. This is the receptacle of the universal consent of mankind ; this has preserved it in its purity ; this can boast the sole authority from God, both to expound it, and to enforce it upon our attention ; and

¹ Part iv., chaps. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

the man, therefore, who abandons the Church of Rome, necessarily plunges into an abyss of error, both as it regards religion and everything else beside.¹ Such being the case, it is the duty of every state in the world, (as the guardian of the best interests of the subject,) to support, by every possible means, that one Church, and that one doctrine, which alone can give stability and peace to society; to punish any dissent from it as a crime against human happiness; and to give implicit obedience to the popedom, as the living concentration of universal consent, the sole guide and arbitrator of human reason. Such is the extraordinary system which M. de Lamennais has propounded and supported, with a learning, power, and eloquence, which raises him to the very summit of the living writers of France.

It is the learning and eloquence, however, we imagine, which abound in the work now before us, rather than the soundness of its arguments, to which it owes all its popularity and success. The principle of authority, put forward as it is in the light of a philosophical, rather than a theological dogma, and stripped of its imposing dress, will hardly bear the test of a moment's close investigation. Put in plain language, it comes just to this—listen not to yourselves, but to those who are worthy of your confidence, and remember that neither you nor they are able *individually* to know for

¹ Part iv., chaps. 2, 14, 16.

certain anything whatever, whether it rest upon reason or experience.¹

The Abbé, perhaps, did not perceive that in undermining the authority of the human faculties, he virtually undermined every other. Admitting that there are persons who are in possession of truth, *they* must have received it from some who went before them; they again from the generation before that; and so on, till we come back to the mind which received the truth directly from God. But these first recipients must have used their own faculties; they must have recorded their own impressions, obtained either through sense, reason, or feeling; and they must have transmitted them through the medium of other minds. If these faculties, therefore, are so weak, wavering, and deceptive, as our author supposes, what guarantee have we that they have either appreciated or transmitted truth with faultless accuracy? Must not tradition be corrupted by the very channel through which it has flowed?

Or, to put the subject in another point of view, let us suppose the Abbé himself in the act of seeking for truth *previous* to the time when he had found the sole fountain, out of which, as he affirms, it can be obtained. How, we would ask, did he come to the conclusion that we must fall back upon authority? How did he prove satisfactorily to his own mind, that the source and centre of authority is in the Catholic Church? Did he not read, and

¹ Damiron, "Histoire de Phil.," Vol. i. p. 269.

search, and argue, and meditate? has he not written whole volumes of controversy on the subject, to persuade men to adopt his opinion? But on his own principle, what is the value of all this argument? Does not *his* reason totter and err, as well as that of other people? and has he not, in fact, followed his own private and consequently fallible judgment, in choosing to yield himself to the supreme direction of his spiritual head?

In matter of fact, private judgment *must* be exercised, whether we will or not. We come into God's world without any mark upon our spirits to tell us where we are to find the truth, and it is equally a matter of private opinion, whether we determine to work out our own system of religious belief for ourselves, or whether we determine to yield to the authority of others. If reason, therefore, be invalid, this very determination which it makes, to resign itself into the hands of authority, may be an erroneous judgment. In short, if the validity of reason be once destroyed, nothing—not even revelation (which must be received through its medium) can save us from universal scepticism; that is, a universal "*reductio ad absurdum*."

That our reasoning here is correct, the subsequent conduct of M. de Lamennais himself has given the best possible proof. At the breaking out of the Revolution of 1830, he began to advocate the complete independence of the clergy, and to argue that, as they were in allegiance to another and a superior power, they ought to have nothing

whatever to do with the temporal government. This doctrine was opposed at the same time by the clergy and the pope. In 1834, he published a small work, entitled, "*Paroles d'un Croyant*," the object of which was to advocate pure democracy on the principles of the New Testament; a theory which was so unpalatable in the same quarters, that the work itself was publicly condemned.¹ Baffled and spurned by the supreme authority, which he had formerly represented as the very concentration of truth, he had nothing left but to declare against it, to commit the crime which he had before held up to reprobation, and to afford another proof, that those who pretend to submit most implicitly to authority, are actually, in doing so, equally following their own private judgment, and quite as ready to exercise it, as all other men are, whenever the occasion may require.²

¹ This work has been recently translated into English, by Rev. E. S. Pryce, B.A.

² In his little treatise, entitled "*Livre du Peuple*," he rejects all political authority whatever, except that which springs from the mass.

DIGRESSION ON M. DE LAMENNAIS' "ESQUISSE D'UNE PHILOSOPHIE."

IN the former edition, I made no mention of this last and chief work of M. de Lamennais, since it could not be reckoned in any sense as belonging to the philosophy of scepticism; I have thought, however, that some account of the conversion of a great and brilliant mind from the principle of authority as attached to human *testimony*, to the principle of authority as attached to human *reason*, might be both interesting and instructive. The work above mentioned, purports to consist of no less than six volumes. The first three appeared in the year 1840, the fourth in 1846, and the two last have still to be expected.¹ The system, however, so far as it goes, is complete: and we shall find little difficulty in giving a tolerably accurate view of the principles on which the whole is founded.

With regard to the *idea* of philosophy, the author has taken a comprehensive, and, as it appears to us, a perfectly correct definition of it. Instead of confining it within the narrow limits either of psychology, or of mere formal and abstract thought, he rises to the full conception of a fundamental science, which embraces all existence in its ample grasp. "Philosophy," he says, "is the effort of the human reason to conceive all things, together with the product of that effort. In this respect, it embraces all sciences, and the developments of all sciences; as also the relations which unite them. It assembles and combines all primary truths, as the primitive facts on which alone it is able to operate, (because the human understanding includes nothing anterior) carries them up to causes and principles, which the mind can grasp; deduces from them their consequences, and seeks to combine them in a theory, which comprehends the universality of things and their laws."²

With regard to the *method* of philosophy, the Abbé has passed, as we just hinted, from the principle of faith in testimony, to faith in the primitive beliefs of mankind. The individual mind he still thinks incapable of founding a valid philosophy, as it can only expound its

¹ The fifth has just now appeared.

² Vol. i. p. 20.

own individual views of things; but there are certain *foundation truths* which all mankind admit: on these we must take our stand, and on them erect a system of pure scientific knowledge. "The True for man," he remarks,¹ "is that in which the human reason acquiesces. If we understand by the human reason, the reason of the generality of men, or the common reason, then all *successive* variation, and all *simultaneous* opposition disappears. The true is no longer determined by the passing state of an individual intelligence; but it is the *constant universal* state of intelligences of the same order. It is that to which the common reason adheres always, and everywhere; that which is invariable like the nature of the beings themselves; and every one from thence has an invariable rule for his thoughts and judgments, an immutable law of affirmation." This method, it will be seen, is nearly identical with Reid's principle of "common sense."

Philosophy, then, starting from this common ground, has three questions to solve:—1. Does anything exist? 2. How does anything exist? 3. Why does anything exist? The solution of these questions comprehends the whole sum and substance of philosophical inquiry. In answering the first of these three questions, it is vain to look for any *proof*, or at least any demonstration of existence. Existence is a primitive fact; it comes to us spontaneously, irresistibly; it is received by all mankind on a pure and undoubted faith. We *know* that there is such a thing as being *per se*, and we know that there is such a thing as being *per alium*; in other words, we have an indestructible belief in the infinite Being, and in the dependent universe. To deny either of these, would imply a palpable contradiction of the very first elements of our consciousness.² The primary object of philosophy, then, is to investigate the nature and relations of God and the universe.

The first book treats of God. Respecting the existence of the Divine being, we need no proof: the negation of him would be the negation of all being. In contemplating, then, the Divine existence, we find, from whatever point of view it be regarded, that it comprehends three great and essential *attributes*. The first is that of *power* or *force*; for all existence implies a divine energy. The second is *intelligence*; for without intelligence, no *formal* creation could have taken place. The third is *love*, which unites the divine power with the divine intelligence, and completes the perfection of the supreme nature.

These three determinations appear in Scripture under the ideas of

¹ Vol. i. p. 9.

² Vol. i. p. 25, *et seq.*

the Father, the Son, and the Spirit ; and all existence will be seen to flow by regular and divine laws from these eternal distinctions in the very nature of Deity itself.¹

The knowledge of God, then, is the basis of all philosophy. Let the eye of the soul gaze steadfastly upon the divine nature ; let us become deeply imbued with the distinctions of the infinite power, intelligence, and love, and we have the key to the comprehension of all the mysteries of being throughout the universe at large.²

Having contemplated the nature of God, the author next approaches the philosophy of *creation*. On this point, several different theories have existed. Some considering it absurd to suppose anything to exist beyond infinite *being* itself, have regarded the universe simply as *phenomenal* ; everything, as far as it possesses any reality, being only a modification of the divine essence. This is pantheism.

Others again, to alleviate the difficulty, have maintained the existence of two eternal principles ; this is the scheme of *dualism*. A third party have explained the act of creation, as being the veritable production of something, which had no kind of existence before, out of nothing ; an hypothesis which implies that there is a greater sum of being in the universe *now* than there was originally, and consequently that the original self-existent being was not *infinite*. All of these theories contain a portion of truth, but not the whole. What is true in the first is, that there can be only *one* infinite substance. What is true in the second is, that the universe is not a pure phenomenon, a mode of the divine. What is true in the third is, that created things do not belong purely and essentially to the divine nature, but exist *out of* God.³

To deduce the finite from the infinite by a regular process of thinking, the author considers impossible. Both are given as primary elements of our knowledge—their coexistence is a mystery ; and yet there can be no reason shown why the same substance may not subsist in two different states, the one finite the other infinite ; although the full comprehension of the method by which this is effectuated, is the central point of philosophical truth, which we can never fully understand.⁴

There are some points in the philosophy of creation, however, which we *can* understand. We know that the infinite being must have contained in himself the *exemplars* of all finite and particular beings, what Plato called the divine ideas. We know that as Deity is infinite power, intelligence, and love, these three principles must

¹ Vol. i. p. 48, *et seq.* ² Vol. i. p. 91. ³ Vol. i. p. 111. ⁴ Vol. i. p. 106.

have concurred in the act of creation, for nothing could have existed without *form*, nor could that form be brought into being without a *power* to effect it ; nor could the form and the force result in any product without their co-operation by a principle of attraction or love. To create, therefore, is to realise *without*, that which first existed *within* the Divine understanding,—and when we have fully explored this truth, we have done all which philosophy *can* do to explain the mystery of *creation*.¹

What idea, then, must we attach to the *material* world ? If every thing is but the realisation of the divine ideas, what is matter ? To this the Abbé replies, that the idea of matter is purely *negative*. The only *positive* existence is power, intelligence, and love ; but these must be *limited*, in order to become finite realities ; and the limitation is, in fact, *all* that we mean by matter. “ Pure matter exists not ; its very idea is a contradiction. The existence of a thing which limits, implies that of a thing limited ; every body then is *complex*. Whatever degree it occupies in the scale of being, that which constitutes it a determinate being, in a word, that which there is of *positive* in it distinct from matter, is simply that which is *limited by matter*. Of the two elements of which it is composed, (the limiting and the limited,) the one expresses that which *is*, the other that which is *not*—namely, the limit in space, the circumscription of its own nature.”² The mode of creature existence, in fact, borrows everything there is *real* in it, from the mode of the divine existence. But in the divine existence there is neither *time*, *space*, nor *motion* ; hence, *time*, *space*, and *motion*, as modes of our existence, are *negative*. What is time ? The limit of eternity. What is space ? The limit of immensity. What is motion ? The limit of omnipresence.”³ Such is the explanation of the truth—“ In him we live, and move, and have our being.”

Having discussed the philosophy of creation, the author next proceeds to explain further the nature of the universe, (Book iii.) The sources from which all our conjectures on the formation of the universe must be drawn, are twofold. First of all, we must appeal to science. The conclusions of Astronomy and of Geology must be marshalled, and all the light must be thrown upon the subject which diligence and perseverance can bring together in a focus. The results of science must next be placed side by side with the conclusions of our higher speculative thinking ; and from the aid they mutually lend to each other, we must ground our views on the true philosophy of the universe. Observation and reason, according to M. de Lamennais,

¹ Book ii. chap. 1, *passim*.

² Vol. i. p. 129.

³ *Ibid.* p. 133.

both combine to show us, that the universe consists of certain manifestations of power, of intelligence, and of love; that the very qualities which philosophy *first* shows to be inherent in the Divine being, are found by experience to form the basis of all the phenomena which the whole of creation alike presents.¹ Pursuing this course of investigation, the author traces the manifestations of *force* or power through the laws of inorganic matter, through the various gradations of organic existence, and in the phenomena of mind. From thence, he proceeds to trace in the same way the various manifestations of intelligence; and, lastly, to exhibit the great attractive principle, which in its various forms is but the diversified manifestation of *love*.²

Having expounded, at some length, the laws of force, of intelligence, and of love in the universe, the author now proceeds (Book iv.) to a separate consideration of the different orders of created existences, which are divided by him into the inorganic, the organic, and the intelligent.

First, inorganic substances have a participation in all three of the primary attributes of the infinite Being, but partake *predominantly* of the attribute of *force*. The action of force is always considered the *primary*, hence the world is represented in its primary state, as a *chaos*, with little manifestation of *form* (intelligence) or of vitality (love). On this part of the universe, the marks of *limitation* and *isolation* are most strongly impressed. Each atom exists only *for itself*, floating without any fixed relation in the universal blank.³

Secondly, that which characterises organic substances, is a vital unity, in which extreme limitation ceases to predominate, and a spontaneous internal principle of union and co-operation is evinced. This, with some individual differences, forms the main peculiarity both of *vegetable* and *animal* existence. Lastly, intelligent beings are those in which power, intelligence, and love attain their purer form and higher intensity. Here the laws of mere sensibility and instinct give way to those of reason and will; and just in proportion as these higher laws are disowned, does man sink back into the lower state of mere animal existence.

The two last books of this first division of philosophy, relate to the general laws of creation, viewed in relation to the essential properties of being. We cannot follow the author particularly through these somewhat intricate researches; we simply point out the fact, that he has entered into a complete discussion of the general laws of bare mat-

¹ Vol. i. p. 152, &c.

² Book ii. chap. 4, 5, 6.

³ Book iv. chap. 2, 3,

ter, of organism, and of mind; that he has compared these laws with the original properties of being, and deduced from thence a connected exposition of the principles of life, organic and intelligent, of reproduction and of conservation;—in a word, that from the primary ideas of force, intelligence, and love, he has sought to cast a light *upon all* the processes of nature, and all the mysteries of being. Having shown that the end of all creation is the manifestation of God, the author professes to have answered the three questions he at first proposed,—to have shown *what* there is,—*how* it is,—and *why*.

The fundamental branch of philosophy being thus completed, we have to look around for its applications. “The general principles we have expounded,” he remarks, “develop themselves on all sides into a multitude of consequences; so that, from the primitive elements of the world, proceed successively the different series of beings which mark the phases of its development. We ought now to follow these consequences into their principal branches, and consider more in detail the inexhaustible wonders of creative power. And as, out of all beings known to us, *man* is the most elevated; as in his form, at the same time one and complex, he combines all inferior existences; it is upon *him* that we must next fix our attention.”¹

The second division of philosophy then relates to *man*. The general laws of all intelligent existence have been already deduced. The first great peculiarity, then, which we find in human nature, when regarded in its individuality, is the *existence of evil*. This is a mystery which all great systems of philosophy have sought to solve, and to this we must accordingly look as a great fact, lying at the very centre of our constitution. To explain the mystery of moral evil, (for all evil has its root here,) we must consider the nature of the creature in relation to the Creator. “Creation implies, in every being, the co-existence of two principles; the one is that which, uniting it to the infinite, is the root of its very existence,—its primitive and fundamental condition; the other is that, which, as constituting its proper individuality, tends to separate it from the infinite—from God.”

There are, therefore, two tendencies in the creature, the one towards *God*, the other towards the *individual*,—towards *self*; and the harmonious co-operation, or if we may term it so, the equilibrium of these two tendencies, is the proper mode of existence for all created intelligence. Minds, however, by virtue of their freedom, have the power to disturb this equilibrium, to violate the law of unity, and to

¹ Vol. i. p. 409.

give preponderance to the law of separation. This isolation of the individual from the infinite, is the root, nay, is the very essence of all evil. Sin can be regarded, therefore, simply in a negative point of view; it is the *limitation* of a soul from its communion with Deity; and is, in fact, the necessary *possibility* of a finite creature. Thus, however baneful to the subject, yet evil does not introduce a single element of *positive* disorder into the universe regarded as the realisation of the Divine ideas. God is not the author of evil, for a negation cannot be created. The great business of man as a moral agent, is to struggle against this limitation, to develop that intelligence which lifts him anew to the intuition of God, and to foster that love which attracts the soul back to its infinite source.¹

To come back, however, to the closer consideration of man in his distinctive nature, there are two points of view in which he must be contemplated. 1. As an organic being; and 2, as a being of intelligence and freedom. On M. de Lamennais' theory of organisation, nutrition, reproduction, life, sleep, death, &c., we shall not dwell, as it involves too many particulars to be compressed into a brief sketch like the present; and, though highly interesting, is rather an *application* than a necessary part of his philosophy. We pass on, therefore, to the theory and analysis of the human mind. Mind is *intelligent*; and to be intelligent, means, to perceive God; that is, not only to communicate with the lower world by sense and instinct, like the brutes, but to rise to the perception of pure, abstract, and eternal *ideas*. The light of *human* intelligence must emanate from the *Divine* intelligence, and consequently man has intellect only by virtue of his relation to the *Eternal Word*. The knowledge of *the true* again produces love—the aspiration of the soul after truth; and this love—this aspiration—man possesses by virtue of his connexion with the Divine love—the *Spirit*. Knowledge and love together determine and give impulse to our *action*, and this action emanating from the will is derived from our participation of the divine *power*—the *causa causarum*. These faculties, however, exist in a veritable *being*, which itself partakes of the divine substance, and the consciousness of this *unity* is the essence of personality—the idea of self.

To begin with the theory of *intelligence*. This we see is now reduced to the discovery of man's relation with the *word*—the Divine intelligence. Psychology, then, cannot be the starting point in philosophy, as it was made by Descartes and Kant; we must *begin* with

¹ Vol. ii. book i. chap. 7, 8.

ontology—with the intuition of the Infinite, and from thence alone can we come down to the proper comprehension of *mind*.

Intelligence, we find, is of two kinds, passive and active. When the light of the Infinite flows in upon the mind, and *faith* goes forth to embrace it, the whole process is, on our part, purely spontaneous. On the other hand, our reflective knowledge is derived from our own designed activity; we *compare, judge, reason*, and thus arrive at truth by another and more laborious route. The human intellect, therefore, may be viewed in two relations, one relative to truth itself—the other to the individual which perceives *the true*. Hence, also, two orders of intellectual laws, those of intuition, and those of logical thinking.¹

In accordance with what has been just established, the human faculties which refer to understanding must be divided into *active* and *passive*. The *passive* faculties are *two*. 1. The consciousness of perceptions or intuitions spontaneously received; and 2, *memory*, which produces the sentiment of personal identity. The active faculties are all grounded in the power of *attention*; that primary act in which the intellectual activity of *the me* manifests itself. Of the complex operations, the first and most simple is comparison; the next is reasoning, which consists in the comparison of an indefinite number of terms; the third is imagination, the province of which is to effect a union between our sensations and ideas, to *image* the spiritual. The expansion of these faculties gives us the whole phenomema of our intellectual life.²

We come next to the theory of the emotions. These all result from the relation in which we stand to the *Divine love*—the spirit.

As there are two kinds of intelligence, the pure and the individual, so there are two kinds of love—that related to the organic or sensitive man, and that related to the higher or spiritual man. From these result all the action and counteraction of the lower and higher affections;—the conflict of the flesh with the spirit.

Lastly, the theory of the will, results from the relation in which we stand to the divine *power*. Here we have the exposition of human liberty, and see the laws of human action evolved in connexion with those of intelligence and love. And thus the author succeeds by the deductive method in founding a psychology which agrees in every respect with the classification, to which the chief inductive systems of the present age have arrived.

The third volume of the work before us, treats of the various

¹ Vol. ii. p. 214, &c.

² Vol. ii. book iii. chap. 5, 9.

branches of human activity ;—the industrial arts—architecture—painting—sculpture—music—poetry—oratory, with the general theory of the beautiful.

The fourth volume treats of *science*, in which the author, passing through the different branches of natural philosophy and physiology, shows how they all harmonise with the principles he has established in his fundamental inquiries. Thus terminates the science of *man* in his individual capacity. The two remaining volumes are intended to discuss the philosophy of *history*, and the doctrine of human society; and when this is completed, we shall have the sketch of a philosophy, which, however its truth be adjudged, none can deny to present a noble monument of the highest philosophical genius and power.

As an effort of inventive thinking and logical deduction, the philosophy we have been examining is doubtless inferior to the principal German systems, to which it probably owes much of its depth. But what it fails in point of originality, is amply repaid us in point of style. M de Lamennais is reckoned among the very first masters of prose composition, and no exposition we could give of his ideas can convey the least conception of the perspicuity, the brilliancy, even the sublimity, with which he threads his way through the lofty regions of thought which he essays to track. Taken as a whole, we know of few modern attempts to unite the whole mass of human knowledge in one connected affiliation of ideas, which has greater claims upon the attention of every philosophical, and, we may even add, of every earnest and religious mind. Much there will, doubtless, be to reject, but strange indeed will it be, if in such a mass of deep and oft-times devotional thinking, we do not gather some precious germs of truth, which will far more than repay the labour which may be expended upon it.

There are several other works beside those we have already mentioned, which might be discussed in connexion with the school of philosophical scepticism grounding itself on authority; of these, however, we shall hardly do more than mention the authors, since in them all the *principle*, metaphysically considered, is the same. The Vicomte de Bonald, born 1762, died 1840, one of those to whom we refer, is usually esteemed a clever and eloquent metaphysical writer, but withal there is an air of sophistry and insincerity, which much detracts from the value of his writings, and creates suspicion, even where perhaps there may be no cause for it. His principal philosophical work is entitled, “*Recherches Philosophiques, sur les premiers objets des Connaissances Morales.*” (Paris, 1838.) The first chapter takes a rapid glance at the history of philosophy, holding up to view the ocean of uncertainty and contradiction in which all the various systems have been involved. Having made the best of this disagreement, he seeks for some *one* plain and palpable fact, as the absolute foundation of our knowledge; and finds this one fact in the gift of language.¹ The second chapter treats of the origin of language; and the third of the origin of writing.

¹ “Il s'agiroit donc de trouver un fait, un fait sensible et extérieur, un fait absolument primitif et à priori, pour parler avec l'école, absolument général, absolument evident, absolument perpétuel dans ses effets; un fait commun, et même usuel, qui pût servir de base à nos connaissances, de principes à nos raisonnements, de point fixe de départ, de *criterium* enfin de la vérité. * * * Ce fait est le don primitif et nécessaire du langage.”—Rech. Phil., p. 86.

The four other chapters which complete the first volume, establish the true definition of *man*, as "*intelligence servie par des organes*," enter into a brief analysis of *thought*, in opposition to the ideologists; and treat at some length the question of the expression of our ideas. The second volume establishes the immateriality of the soul, discourses of primary, secondary, and final causes, and ends by drawing general conclusions from the whole enquiry.

The theory then which M. de Bonald advocates respecting the origin of human knowledge is this:— That man when created must have been furnished by God with a perfectly formed language (to prove which he enters into a great variety of arguments). That, words being the signs of ideas, there must have been communicated with the primitive language a considerable stock of notions, which form, to the present day, the nucleus of all our knowledge, and which have been transmitted by the use of language unimpaired from one generation to another. That it is vain to seek for absolute knowledge from our own consciousness, from the efforts of our reason, or from our moral nature; but that we must find it, if at all, in the relics of those primitive and divinely communicated notions, which have come down traditionally from age to age, and which are preserved, and as it were stereotyped, in the various languages of mankind.¹

That there is somewhat of ingenuity in the the-

¹ See chap. i. and ii.

ory before us, and much art in working it up to an appearance of probability, may be readily admitted; but there are two considerations especially which deprive it at once of much of its value. First, it cannot be demonstrated that there was any primitive language at all, beyond the natural propensity implanted in the human mind, to embody its thoughts in external signs. To most minds, indeed, the latter hypothesis is by far the more probable and simple. Again, if we are to study truth from the words in which it is expressed, we must remember, that those words have ideas answering to them; so that after all it is to the human reason or consciousness we must look as the source from which every thing proceeds, and which makes words themselves the fixed representatives of thought. If it should be replied, that the first thoughts of the mind must have been divinely inspired, then the whole question is removed from the platform on which it was before argued, and merges into the higher discussion respecting the origin of our ideas. Taking up the matter in this point of view, we think that our author's eloquence would hardly serve him to make the whole theory appear in quite so plausible a light.¹

Another variation of the principle of authority comes before us in the works of the Abbé Bautain.

¹ The other two principal works of this author, the "Législation Primitive," and the "Mélanges Littéraires, Politiques et Philosophiques," treat almost entirely of political and æconomic questions. For an account of Bonald's literary life, see "Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques," *in loco*.

A compendium of his philosophical opinions was published in a small tractate in the year 1833; this treatise has since been republished as a preliminary discourse to his "Psychologie Expérimentale," (1839); to which has since been added another work, entitled "Philosophie Morale," (1842).

The Abbé commences by mourning the present state of intellectual disorganisation and scepticism, which prevails throughout society in his native country. In order to revive the belief of the people in all the great truths which lie at the basis of human happiness, he affirms that we must have recourse to *philosophy*, not indeed as a *source*, but as a guide to the source where truth alone can be found.

To what philosophy, then, must we apply as most capable of taking us under its guidance? This question leads our author to take a rapid glance at the different schools at present in vogue amongst the French academic institutions. The teaching of the *universities* is divided between *three* systems:— 1. The sensationalism of Condillac; 2. The psychology of Scotland; and, 3. The modern eclecticism of Paris. With regard to the philosophy of Condillac, this he considers is already virtually defunct; its utter impotence to develop any other than the most shallow and useless truths, has been well nigh universally acknowledged. To the psychology of Scotland somewhat more honour must be assigned; but this also stops short before all the most important and significant problems, and declares them *incapable of solution*. Lastly, the eclectic philo-

sophy, though brilliant in its first appearance, and profuse in its promises, yet altogether fails of rendering us any criterion for the recognition of absolute truth, and leads ultimately into the abyss of pantheism.

In the theological seminaries of France, *two* philosophical methods are recognised ; that of the scholastic rationalism, and that of common sense. The scholastic system is a bare logical formalism, which ought to have been defunct three centuries ago. The principle of common sense, on the other hand, requires some little consideration. By this, M. Bautain intends to signify all those systems of philosophy which essay to build themselves upon the universal testimony of mankind. It is more particularly in reference to M. de Lamennais that he has contested this principle. The doctrine of authority, which that brilliant writer has propounded, as resting upon the catholic testimony of mankind, he considers to be hampered with the greatest absurdity, and the most palpable contradictions. The theory, he shows, comes to this, that although the individual reason is fallible, yet by the combination of an indefinite number of fallible minds, we may at length attain to a principle of infallibility. M. Bautain, having thus cleared all the other systems of the country out of his way, next propounds his own doctrine, namely, that all infallible truth comes from *God* ; that the *word* is the sole source to which we have to look ; that here alone we gain a fixed point to rest upon, one which lies entirely without

the perpetual oscillations of human opinion. Still philosophy is not to be rejected. It has once led the mind of man away *from* the truth, by its false pretensions; now it has to make reparation by leading him back *to* the only source where eternal truth can be found. The problem of philosophy, therefore, in the present day, is to prove the *necessity* of a revelation, and show how all human efforts terminate there, as in their last resting place, their final goal.¹

With this purpose in view, the author has entered with great learning and acuteness into the question of psychology and of morals. Although he rests all ultimate certitude upon divine authority, yet he gives a wide and a glorious scope for philosophy, in constituting it the handmaid of revelation, the *παίδευγος*, by which we are to be conducted into the higher spheres of truth. We see not, indeed, (with some adjustments respecting the primary grounds of certainty in matters of philosophy,) any obstacle against our forming a coalition with the principle here enunciated, namely, that philosophy is to be our guide into those higher regions, where we can gaze upon truth only by the superior aid of a light from heaven.²

Another author, differing in many respects from the preceding, yet maintaining a theory which has some points of similarity, is the Baron d'Eckstein.

¹ Discours Préliminaire.

² M. Bautain, together with MM. Jouffroy and Damiron, were the three earliest and most able pupils of Cousin at the normal school. His philosophy often betrays the master-mind who instructed him.

This erudite writer, though a native of Denmark, yet, from the conclusion of the last European war, became a regular inhabitant of France, and identified himself with her in all her religious and political interests. A man of great learning as well as great readiness in embodying his opinions in writing, he undertook the editorship of a periodical entitled "Le Catholique," from the articles of which alone his philosophy is to be gathered. With a tone more mild and liberal than most of those we have already noticed, he attached himself, for the most part, to the views of that theological party, denying (and here consists his scepticism) the possibility of obtaining truth from the testimony of our individual consciousness, or the efforts of our own individual reason, but referring us, for that purpose, to the *authority* of the whole mass of humanity.

"It is not the individual man," he affirms, "the man of this age or of this country, to which we are to look, but to the ideal man, the type and model of the whole race. But where is this to be found, except in Adam and in Christ, who both represent our nature; the one, as created good, and then fallen—the other, as regenerated and divinely restored? Christ and Adam!—here we have *man*—the true and absolute man. What, then, must we study in order to know him? We must consult tradition; we must thoroughly initiate ourselves, by history, into the real sense of primitive Christian tradition. The whole is an affair of erudition and historical criticism; the great question is, to examine and

understand the different monuments, which can re-trace to us these two models of humanity—the one placed at the cradle of the world, the other at its re-creation. First, our view must be turned to India, and the regions which touch upon it ; then, Greece and Alexandria, Rome and Judea ; all these announce, prepare, determine, and accompany the coming of the God-man. And as, from Adam to Christ, and from Christ to our own time, the human type which they bear in them, has not passed from age to age, from country to country, without altering—as it has had its variations, its accidents, its vicissitudes, we must accordingly follow them through all their movements ; we must explain and systematise them ; and by so doing only can we embrace the whole subject, and give to our ideas the character of catholicity.”¹

This brief summary may suffice to give a general idea of the method by which the Baron proposes to search after truth ; to describe his distrust in all purely philosophical processes ; and to explain on what grounds it is that he lays so great a stress on the principle of authority.

From the views we have given of the theologico-sceptical school in France, it will be seen, that, while all its advocates take their stand upon catholic truth, mediated by *authority*, yet the principle of authority itself is accepted in many different significations. With M. de Lamennais, in his earlier

¹ Damiron's " Histoire de Phil." vol. i. p. 315.

writings, catholic truth was that which comes down to us by *human testimony*, from the primitive revelations of God to mankind ; while in his later works, it is that which rests upon the fundamental beliefs of our moral and intellectual nature. With M. de Bonald, the principle of authority vested itself in the primitive fact of language ; a theory by which he sought to establish the validity and divine authority both of the monarchical and ecclesiastical institutions of the Christian world. With the Baron d'Eckstein, the doctrine of authority assumes another and more genial form ; it is authority based upon the deepest researches into the historical facts and catholic beliefs of universal man. The more narrow and least tenable theory of authority, is that of M. de Maistre, which makes catholic truth exist simply in the bosom of the Catholic church, and ignores all philosophy which does not base itself upon its peculiar doctrines.

This latter system still numbers its advocates in France, and is maintained, in some instances, with an amount of learning and ability, which, while we repudiate the doctrine, commands our respect for its advocates. We might mention the eloquent "conférences" of M. Lacordaire, and the elaborate work of M. Nicolas on Philosophy applied to Religion, as recent instances of the activity of this school. These, however, belong more to the department of theology. The most able work of a purely philosophical character with which I am acquainted, is an

“Essay on Pantheism,” by M. Maret.¹ As this essay gives, perhaps, the most perfect example of the views and position of the philosophico-catholic school in France, at the present time, it may be desirable to give a brief exposition of its plan and its arguments.

The main object which the author has in view, is to fix the charge of pantheism upon all the modern philosophical systems, and then to hold up the catholic doctrine as the only alternative to which the human mind can have recourse. To accomplish this purpose, he begins by an examination of the principal idealistic systems in vogue; chiefly, however, of those advocated in France. The most prominent of these is the philosophy of M. Cousin. Having done justice to the splendid abilities of that great writer, he proceeds first of all to examine the prominent doctrines to which the weight of his name is attached. Taking up successively his theory of pure reason, of the infinite, of creation, and of history, he attempts to show, that they all imply a varying, unsettled, progressive truth, which is none other than bringing down the infinite to the finite; making Deity the process of mind in the world, and instituting, in fact, a disguised pantheism. The same charge which is thus fixed upon the master, is next carried on to the pupils. M M. Jouffroy and Damiron are both held up to view as disguised, perhaps unconscious pantheists; at all events, it

¹ “Essai sur le Panthéisme dans les Sociétés modernes,” par H. Maret. (Paris, 1841.)

is argued, that nothing else can flow from the principles involved in their philosophy.

The very same fundamental principles are next discovered in the writings of M M. Michelet, Lermnier, and Guizot: for do they not all advocate the *progressiveness* of truth, and the progressiveness of society; and do they not regard this development of humanity as the revelation of the Divine ideas? If God thus develop himself in humanity, what can we conclude, but that he is not *eternally* one all-perfect being; but is, in fact, the unity and totality of all *thought* in the world—that is, *one* with the universe.¹

M. Maret next approaches the various systems of modern mysticism. Collecting together the views of Saint Simon, of Fourier, of Pierre Leroux, and the whole school of social progressionists, he analyses them much in the same way as those of the eclectics, and concludes that these are, even in a higher degree than the former, pantheistic in their whole nature and tendency.² These criticisms being completed, we have in the next chapter the real point of the whole essay, namely, that there is no possible medium between pantheism on the one side, and catholicism on the other. The last century witnessed the spread of deistic and atheistic opinions. These were, in fact, nothing at their root but utter and universal scepticism. They explained none of the great questions relating to the universe, none relating to the origin, nature,

¹ “Essai sur le Panthéisme,” chap. i.

² Chap. ii.

and destiny of man—in a word, they rejected all truth except the mere impressions of sense, and degraded mankind, morally and religiously speaking, to the level of the brute. In the present century, scepticism has been mastered and subdued. The great questions respecting the universe, the soul, and the Deity, have revived; the belief in the spiritual has returned; but have the problems thus excited been duly solved, and repose given to the mind eager for truth? The last chapters are an answer to this inquiry. *Every attempt at a philosophical solution throughout Europe, has ended in pantheism*; and thus the only two alternatives for every thinking man, is either to declare himself a pantheist, or to take refuge in the bosom of the Catholic church. The whole question may be reduced to a small compass. There are, says the author, two notions of truth, and two methods of investigating it. First, it is regarded as something *fixed* and stable, something which knows no progression, but, when once grasped by the mind, is eternally the same. This is the catholic view. “Catholicism starts from a divine revelation; it believes that the divine truths are preserved on the earth by a living and infallible authority; in a word, it assigns to this authority, as the depositary of the divine word, characters which distinguish it from all without, and permit all men to read upon it the seal of God.” “The second notion of truth represents it as moving, variable, progressive. Truth is essentially relative to the age and the manners; it

follows the movements of time, the modifications of space. Truth, then, is not the point of departure for humanity, it is rather the term to which we seek to arrive." These, according to M. Maret, are the two alternations to which every reflecting mind must come, and the claims of which are for ever irreconcilable. Accept the latter, and you accept pantheism; accept the former, and you find rest in the infallibility of the Church.

The matter being brought to this crisis, the author's work becomes now straightforward. He has simply to refute the one alternative, and maintain the other. To do this, he offers us a rapid history of pantheism from the earliest ages, and collecting its fundamental principles, first classifies, and then demolishes them at his leisure. Next he gives us a summary of the Catholic doctrine, and ends by repelling the objections of rationalists and unbelievers against *Christianity*, as though by that means he were defending and establishing *Catholicism*.

The work as a whole, though exhibiting much talent, is as fine a specimen of Jesuitical sophistry as could very well be adduced. It evinces the talent (so necessary to the sophist) of passing over the crucial points of the question with an air of confident rapidity, and then bringing whole magazines of artillery against doctrines which his opponents really hold no more than himself. The charge of pantheism affixed to the whole range of modern philosophy, is as unjust as it is absurd; and the *imputation of consequences* upon which that whole

charge is built, one of the most insidious of all the logical fallacies. The authors whom he criticises, are in most instances quite as strongly opposed to pantheism as he is ; and, even if it were not so, *they* do not present every alternative which modern philosophy can exhibit on the idealistic side of the question. But to come to the main point of the argument, namely, the two views of truth, on which the author erects his whole superstructure ; what real force is there, after all, in this much vaunted demonstration ? None whatever. It all proceeds upon the confusion of Truth, regarded in its *objective*, and in its *subjective* point of view. We admit,—all philosophers, except professed pantheists, admit that truth, *objectively considered*, is fixed and eternal. What writers, in fact, have maintained the eternal and immutable distinctions of *moral relations* more earnestly than the very philosophers he upbraids and opposes ? At the same time, there is assuredly a progress in the subjective signification which mankind attach to these objective realities. Has not religion itself, though objectively the same, appeared under different forms in different dispensations ? and can the eternal ideas which Christianity involves, be manifested to the human mind through every age of the world alike ? Under the light of this very simple and obvious distinction, the argument we are considering vanishes into a perfect nonentity : we still see that truth may be one, and yet that the human mind may make continued advancement in the development

of it; nay, that it is necessary to prevent the absolute stagnation of the human intellect, that it should be ever pressing onwards to higher perfection. For here we know *in part*, and we prophesy (teach) in part; and it is not till that which is perfect be come, that that which is in part shall be done away.

We should say, therefore, that instead of there being no medium between the pantheist and the catholic, the truth lies precisely in this middle point, which is altogether passed over. The pantheist takes his stand upon the subjective principle, the Romanist upon the objective; the stand-point of a *truly* catholic system is in the centre between both. While it admits the immutability of truth *objectively* considered, it maintains the doctrine of *progress* as it regards truth *subjectively* considered. And thus while it upholds the unity, the personality, and the unchangeableness of God, it throws the incentive of hope into the field of human research, and instead of bidding us pace the monotony of one eternal circle of ideas, tells us to gird our faculties to new achievements, and to prepare the world for a happier day.

In concluding this sketch of the French authoritative scepticism, we shall make one or two observations upon the principle of authority itself. And, first of all, we are far from denying its value, upon many important topics within the range of human knowledge. In theology, for example, when once we have got beyond the precincts of natural

religion, authority is our best guide;—inspired authority standing foremost, that of tradition acting occasionally as its interpreter. With the truth affirmed by such authority, philosophy has little to do, except expounding the ideas on which it rests, and testing the validity of the evidence by which it is upheld; for beyond this it can only reserve for itself the power of pronouncing a veto upon any dogma which contradicts our natural faculties. The God of revelation and the Creator of the human faculties are the same; and if these *seem* to contradict each other, it only proves either that the revelation is spurious, (we know that our faculties are not,) or that we have misinterpreted its meaning. With this exception, however, we conceive that the authority of a well-authenticated revelation must be regarded, within its own proper limits, as paramount and supreme.

Authority, however, while it is most valuable within the province of theology, yet, even within the range of philosophy itself, is often of no little service. The appeal to the common consent of mankind, is one which has great weight in aiding us to determine accurately the entire phenomena of the human consciousness. Individual *observation* may prove imperfect or fallacious; but where the common consent of mankind bears testimony to the certainty and uniformity of any of our mental phenomena, we can have the less hesitation in regarding them as valid. What other than the principle of authority, as far as regards psychical observation,

was that of Reid, when he appealed to the common sense of mankind? What other is the principle of all who strengthen the testimony of their own consciousness by that of their fellow creatures? In philosophy itself, therefore, authority is not to be altogether despised; while with regard to matters of faith and mere opinion, it is the great appeal in which we must take refuge—the best guide by which we can be directed—the clearest voice that speaks to us amidst the discordant sound of private judgment.

Now the error of the school which we have just described lies here,—that instead of thankfully receiving the aid of authority in those questions on which it is entitled to speak, it has exaggerated, if not its value, still the *extent* of its application, and made it at length the sole organ or channel of all truth. The fallacy couched in this procedure becomes evident at once from the consideration, that no truth which comes to us through a secondary medium, as does that of authority, can be *absolute* and *fundamental*. However unobjectionable the medium itself may be, still the knowledge it conveys has to be received through our own faculties; and if those faculties be not of equal credibility, of course the whole result may be vitiated. To plant oneself upon authority, and then deny the validity of the human intelligence to discover, test, or appreciate truth, is like sawing off the bough of the tree upon which we are standing. As the bough, severed from the stem, must fall and

hurl us with it to the earth, so authority, if severed from the whole tree of human knowledge, must sink to the ground, and carry those who trust to it to the same ruin. *God makes his first and fundamental revelation to us in the constitution of our own minds.* If the credibility of this primitive revelation be rejected, it is impossible ever to prove the reality of any other. For how can we prove it? How, except by the laws of reason and the rules of testimony? In these, accordingly, all truth, as far as we are concerned, must be grounded; and the scepticism, which would shake their authority, though it attempt to furnish another in its place, must at length prove detrimental to the stability of the whole edifice of human knowledge.

The scepticism we have just described is without doubt that which possesses, in France, the most learned and accomplished supporters. It is by no means, however, that under which the greatest number of minds in that country are to be enrolled. In England, the *popular* scepticism, if there be any, is that which sacrifices philosophy on the shrine of theological faith: in France, on the contrary, it is rather of the nature we have already described, under the appellation of the scepticism of ignorance—a scepticism in which many of the most necessary beliefs of humanity have been altogether lost. The history of France, during the last two or three cen-

turies, unfolds to us the process, by which that country has well nigh sunk its faith in God and immortality. The age of the Reformation caused to resound through the French provinces, as it did through the whole of Europe, the war-cry of intelligence and liberty against spiritual despotism. Persecution and bloodshed followed, and the holiest precepts of religion were often violated by those, who stood forth as its firmest champions. The effect of this upon the minds, that stood by to gaze upon the contest, could not be long of an equivocal nature. Their faith in the Christianity they professed was shaken at once by the arguments of the Reformer, and the practice of the Catholic, the former appealing to their intellectual, the latter to their moral nature ; and they learned, unhappily, to despise the one, before their belief was replaced by the other. The results of this soon became evident in the rise of men, who, like Voltaire, sported with the most solemn truths of human belief ; in the establishment of the atheistical school of the French Encyclopædists ; and, what was still more decisive, in the sympathy with which their works were greeted by thousands throughout the country.

What was thus fairly commenced, the horrors of the Revolution so effectually completed, that there was hardly a single region of human thought in which the tide of opposition, that raged against everything existing under the old regime, was not manifested. Monarchical institutions gave way to complete democracy ; the various classes of human

society were all thrown down to the broad level of citizenship; the religion of Christ (the religion of pure spirituality) gave way to the grossest materialism; the morality of the Gospel, which enjoins self-sacrifice, was exchanged for that selfish system which knows no good but pleasure, no evil but pain. The reaction, in a word, was intense, complete, universal, and as the next generation (one which had been born and fostered in these principles) grew up, though there was still the moral nature and the religious capacity innate within them, yet, alas! there was no lofty virtue for the one, no God for the other. The nineteenth century, accordingly, has exhibited to us the people of France, to a vast extent, *without a belief* in the great truths of God and immortality: happy will it be, if, too eager to supply this want, it does not again rush into the dim regions of religious mysticism and superstition. Perhaps we should be hardly correct in terming the scepticism of ignorance a philosophical school at all: it is rather the *negation* of a school; still it is a great fact in the present aspect of that country, and, as such, we thought it not right to pass it by without a cursory notice.

SECT. III.—*Modern Scepticism in Germany.*

The intellectual atmosphere of Germany is one by no means calculated to encourage the growth of scepticism, least of all to cherish those two species

of it, which we have described as existing to a large extent in France. Whatever other characteristics the German mind may or may not possess, there are few who would deny to it a power of deep reflection upon the world within, and a quiet independence that loves to probe every moral question to its foundations. The Germans have long proved themselves to be the thinkers and the investigators of Europe, furnishing the material out of which the more adroit and polished minds of England and France draw perpetual supplies for their higher literary productions.

If this be true, what should we say is likely to be the influence of two such mental qualities as those above mentioned, in relation to the progress of philosophy? It appears evident, we think, at first sight, that a people who reflect deeply, and who investigate patiently, are not likely to become, to any wide extent, involved in the scepticism of *ignorance*. It is those who allow their faith to be destroyed, without having reflective habits of mind sufficiently active to supply the loss with equal rapidity, that are liable to fall into such a state of mind. The German mind, however, cannot well be without a faith. If one system of belief falls another rapidly springs up; if one dogma comes to an end, another is ready on the instant to take its place. So great is the fertility of thought and speculation in the German world of intellect, that there seem to be theories in store to supply any imaginable series of intellectual loss that the future

may present. There may be among the Germans hypotheses monstrous as well as credible, there may be systems of metaphysics and of theology extravagant as well as sober; there may be fancies for the poetical, and wanderings for the eccentric; but there cannot well be an absolute nonentity of belief from not knowing what there is to believe.

These same mental qualities, again, stand almost as much opposed to the scepticism of authority. To search into the monuments of antiquity, is, indeed, a labour for which the German mind is admirably qualified; but when all the authority of these records is discovered, its independence prompts further questions of this nature:—What is the authority of this authority? What means had men of yore to discover truth more than I have myself? Or, if the authority be Divine, the question still comes, What is the testimony on which it rests? What the process by which it reaches my own mind? What the ideas it involves? The German thinker is too subjective in his views and tendencies to be satisfied with any merely objective evidence. He wants to know what must necessarily be true to himself individually; what confidence is to be placed even in the dictates of his own reason and his own consciousness; in other words, he wants a fundamental philosophy as a substratum, before he can allow to authority the command, which it claims over the human mind.

The only scepticism, then, of which Germany is in danger, is that of the philosophical or absolute

kind ; for, should the reflections and the investigations of her metaphysicians in any instances so clash with one another, that no definite results can be arrived at, such a scepticism, of course, must follow. The only instance, perhaps, in the whole philosophical history of Germany, in which a *shallow* scepticism came into vogue, is to be found during the reign of the Leibnitzian-Wolfian metaphysics. At that time the influx of French writers, on the one hand, disseminated a low worthless sensationalism ; while, on the other, the pedantry and formalism of the idealistic school brought the deeper method of philosophising into universal contempt. The result was what we just remarked ; a low, shallow, and railing scepticism, un-German in its real character, but rendered sufficiently influential by circumstances to produce a baneful effect, both upon literature and morals. It was this, in fact, that roused up the mighty spirit of Kant to an intellectual effort, which swept away all the minor actors from the stage, and commenced a new scene in the wondrous drama of the world's philosophy.

Whilst Kant, however, opposed so successfully the shallow scepticism of the age in which he lived, his philosophy contained many germs of another species of scepticism far more deep and philosophical. Determined to silence for ever the quibbles and sophistries, in which so many were indulging, respecting the fundamental questions of ontology, of morals, of religion, he conceived the idea of removing them into a region altogether

inaccessible to the reach of ordinary logic, and there to let them repose in solemn majesty.

The general idea of the Kantian metaphysics is, we trust, sufficiently remembered by the attentive reader to render repetition needless; but still, to prevent the obscurity, which a too great brevity might cause, we shall re-enumerate one or two of the principal conclusions. Of the three great faculties of the human mind, sensation, understanding, and reason, the first alone is capable of furnishing the *material* of our knowledge, the two latter are merely *formal*. Sensation gives us the simple fact of objective existence; understanding gives form to whatever notions we may have of it. Sensation, accordingly, in making known to us the reality of an objective world, does not tell us of what it consists, whether it be of a spiritual or of any other essence; it simply assures us of objective *phenomena*; and to these phenomena, accordingly, our real knowledge of the world without must be confined. Again: since the understanding gives to our notions all their peculiar forms and aspects, defining their quantity, quality, relation, and mode of existence, this part of our knowledge must be purely subjective, and its truth, consequently, depend upon the validity of our faculties. But further: not only is the understanding merely formal in its nature, but reason is so likewise. Reason strives to bring the notions of the understanding to a systematic unity, and in doing so it personifies its own laws, and regards

them as having a real objective existence; the three personifications being the soul, the universe, and the Deity. Any logical reasoning upon these three ideas, upon their existence, or their nature, Kant shows to be entirely fallacious, giving rise in each instance to endless paralogisms. They are, in fact, *as ideas*, the spontaneous productions of our own reason, and to argue upon them as being either realities or non-realities, is allowing the understanding to intrude upon a province (that, namely, of the supersensual or spiritual) with which it has nothing whatever to do.

In this way, Kant removed the chief points around which scepticism delighted to linger entirely out of the reach of all argumentation. If any one disputed respecting the material world, his reply was, "Of what value is discussion about an existence, of which we can never know ought beyond mere phenomena?" Should any one contest or propound any theories respecting the nature of the soul, the origin of the world, or the existence of God, the same withering repulse was given, "Why reason of that which lies beyond all reasoning?" "Your notions of the soul, of the universe, of God," he would continue, "are but subjective ideas; they are personifications of your own mental processes; I can give you strong reasons of a moral nature to believe in the soul and in God; but, as for theoretical science, it is incapable of saying anything whatever, whether it be for or *against*."

But now it becomes a question to us, whether Kant, in cutting off the plea of the sceptic of his day, did not prove too much ; and whether he does not give occasion to another kind of scepticism, more deeply laid than that which he destroyed. Let us see the results, to which his principles gave origin. Reinhold, whom we must look upon as the immediate continuator of Kant's philosophy, was dissatisfied with the analysis which it furnished of the perceptive faculty. The truth of our sense-perceptions, he considered, was too rapidly taken for granted ; and he suggested, therefore, the propriety, nay, the necessity, of going one step backwards, and analysing the *consciousness* itself, as that in which the perceptions themselves are to be found. The reality, therefore, of an objective world lying without our consciousness was put in a much less obvious light by Reinhold than by Kant. The latter took the phenomena of sense at once for granted, as much so, indeed, as did Locke himself ; the former, on the contrary, affirmed, that a *philosophical* conviction of their reality must result from a due analysis of the consciousness, and a recognition of the objective element which it contains.

The spirit of speculation being thus once more aroused, scepticism began to make its formal appearance in the person of Gottlob Ernst Schulze, then professor of philosophy at the university of Helmstadt. In the year 1792, Schulze published an anonymous work, entitled, "*Ænesidemus*, or

a Treatise on the Principles of the fundamental Philosophy of Professor Reinhold.”¹ In this work he denies that Reinhold has succeeded in proving, that any distinction of subject and object, of matter and form, can be learned from the analysis of man’s inner consciousness. There exist in the consciousness itself, without any controversy, the varied phenomena which it presents to us; but as to separating these phenomena into different elements, and showing that the one belongs to the subjective, the other to the objective world, this he affirms to be impossible.

In urging these results, Schulze did not intend to deny the existence of an objective world, he merely intended to show, that it is impossible for us to *prove it*. His scepticism, therefore, consists in the conviction he professed, that a fundamental philosophy, in which the phenomena of existence are explained and man’s relation to the outward world deduced, cannot possibly be realised. His reasons for this are condensed by Michelet, in his History of Modern Philosophy, into the following particulars. First, in so far as speculative philosophy must be a *science* (Wissenschaft), it requires principles which are unconditionally *true*. Such

¹ *Ænesidemus*, oder über die Fundamente der von dem Herrn Professor Reinhold, in Jena gelieferten Elementar-philosophie, nebst Einer Vertheidigung des Skepticismus gegen die Anmassungen der Vernunftkritik. (1792) The strain of this work is purely *critical*: its sole object being to confute the attempt of Reinhold to found a purely rational and dogmatical system, respecting the human consciousness and the certainty of our knowledge respecting the objectively real.

principles, however, are impossible, because the coincidence of the idea of a thing with the thing itself is never given *necessarily* and *immediately*. Secondly, whatever the speculative philosopher asserts that he knows respecting the fundamental principles of conditional existence around him, he knows only through the medium of his own ideas. The understanding, however, which is conversant simply with ideas, has no power to represent to itself any objective reality. Representations are not things themselves, and ideas can never decide upon the objectively *real*. Thirdly, the speculative philosopher rests his science of the absolute grounds of conditional existence mainly upon an inference drawn from the nature of an effect to the nature of a corresponding cause. From the nature of an effect, however, that of its cause cannot with the slightest safety be concluded: for, that is no other than concluding the conditioned from the unconditioned. By arguments of this kind, Schulze aimed at resisting the pretensions of speculative philosophy; and had he followed out his principles, would, in all probability, have furnished in its place a theory of human knowledge grounded entirely upon experience as the only real foundation.¹

The sceptical tendency, however, which was so

¹ Schulze's views respecting the real nature of human knowledge are contained in his "*Kritik der theoretischen Philosophie*." This is termed dogmatical scepticism, in contradistinction to the other work, which is termed "*Critical Scepticism*," or "*Anti-dogmatism*." See Michelet, vol. i. p. 245, *et seq.*

plainly manifested by Schulze, was not followed up to any extent by after-writers. Jacob Sigismond Beck and Salomon Maimon, it is true, added somewhat to the sceptical arguments against Reinhold, and for some time threatened to found another school of philosophy, in which all the conclusions of the human reason respecting the grounds of our knowledge should be contested and denied.¹ This sceptical tendency, however, proved of short duration; and from the opening of the nineteenth century to the present hour, Germany has presented no school whatever, we might almost say no individual, who could be accused of cherishing the spirit of absolute scepticism.

The younger Fichte, in summing up the different directions in which the speculative spirit of Germany in modern times has flowed, makes the following mention of Schulze and his principles, together with their nature and their origin:—"The reflecting (or subjective) school, since its revival by Kant and Jacobi, has included within itself its whole process of development. We need only to place the individual forms of it as they stand by themselves in connexion, or to develop them logically from one another, in order to embrace the whole cycle of their possible phases. The separation of the con-

¹ Beck's "Einzig möglicher Standpunkt," was a work of some reputation. He opposed alike Reinhold and Schulze, and maintained a system, not of empirical scepticism, like the latter, but a system of idealistic scepticism, which was not far from treading upon the verge of Fichte's subjective idealism.

sciousness from objective reality in our reflection, can, on the one hand, proceed to the complete negation of the possibility of deciding upon truth (scepticism of Schulze); or, on the other hand, reflection may bethink itself of the original and unalterable certainty attached to the consciousness, whether it arise from faith or intuitive reason. If the certainty arise from faith, as with Jacobi, then bare reflective knowledge is regarded as empty, unnecessary, yea, superfluous in the acquisition of truth: if it arise from intuitive reason, then there is room left for a species of thinking between reflection and immediate faith. Fries, therefore, the connecting link between Kant and Jacobi, placed knowledge and faith as directly opposed to each other—the one referring to the world of phenomena, the other to the higher world of ideas. Bouterwek, again, showed the unsatisfactory nature of this relation, pointing out the alternative, either of giving one's self up entirely to faith, or of boldly carrying out the principles of scepticism. Eschenmayer, at length, embraced the former of these opposites, in which he realised the direct extreme of the contrary hypothesis of Schulze."¹

Such are the different hypotheses which, according to Fichte, may arise from the separation of subject and object in the human consciousness by means of reflection. How far the sceptical tendency might have been followed out, had nothing occurred to

"Gegensatz Wendepunkt und Ziel heutiger Philosophie," Part i. p. 298.

stop its career, it is impossible to say ; but just at the juncture to which our present history refers, Fichte began to pour forth his startling idealism, and to draw away the whole philosophical world in that direction. Instead of speculating any longer upon the evidence of the objective element in our consciousness, instead of appealing to faith, or intuitive reason, or any other principle, by which its reality might be established, Fichte boldly denied the real existence of it in philosophy altogether ; accounted for the phenomena of the case upon purely subjective grounds ; and thus crushed the rising efforts of scepticism under the more potent arms of idealism. From that time idealism has been the national philosophy of Germany, without allowing a rival to appear in the field.

The result of this chapter may be concentrated in one sentence. With few exceptions, the chief scepticism of England is, that of authority ; the chief scepticism of France, that of ignorance ; the chief scepticism of Germany, that of an absolute kind, which bases itself upon the denial of the fundamental laws of human nature.

CHAPTER VII.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN MYSTICISM.

SECT. I.—*Modern Mysticism generally ;—In England.*

WE have now, at some length, traced the course which three of the great generic systems of philosophy have taken during the present century. We have seen the efforts which sensationalism has made to analyse all the materials of human knowledge, and deduce the primary elements of which it is composed : and, even while pointing out its many errors and defects, we have acknowledged the fruitful results, which its close investigation of our sense-perceptions has ever produced. Next, we have marked the deeper channel in which idealism has flowed, and observed its tendency to become lost in a sea of interminable speculation upon subjects, which no sounding-line of human construction can ever fathom. Both the systems admit, that truth *can* be discovered by man's natural faculties, only the former allows no source of ideas to be possible except the senses, while the latter contends for

another and a profounder source, which has its seat in the very depths of man's intellectual nature. Thirdly, we have noticed and weighed the efforts of scepticism to undermine the whole foundation of truth, and bring us to the comfortless conclusion that our highest knowledge is to perceive, that we know nothing. The fourth generic system yet remains—that which, refusing to admit that we can gain truth with absolute certainty either from sense or reason, points us to faith, feeling, or inspiration, as its only valid source. This we term *mysticism*.

As the two former systems are those around which metaphysical speculation and inquiry for the most part gather, scepticism and mysticism have ever played a somewhat subordinate part in the history of philosophy. Instead of being the *spontaneous* production of the human mind, they have generally arisen from the errors and extravagancies of other attempts. Scepticism, for instance, may be regarded as a kind of corrective process to prevent the erection of a philosophical superstructure upon an insecure foundation. The precise office which mysticism has performed in the progress of human knowledge, is that of discovering and asserting the worth of our higher feelings, whether they be instinctive, moral, or religious; for there is great danger both in the case of the sensationalist and the idealist, lest, devoted, the one to the analysis of sense, the other of reason, they should overlook those sensibilities of our nature, which often speak the language of truth as certainly, if not as clearly,

as reason itself. In this case, the voice of mysticism warns them of their error ; it tells them that there is a source of truth which they have both left unnoticed, and which often avails, even when nothing else perhaps can, to direct reason into the right path of investigation.

To elucidate the origin and nature of mysticism, we must glance for a moment at the connexion which subsists between the intellect and the emotions in the constitution of the human mind. Man may be said to have been created for two purposes, to *know* and to *do*. We can conceive of a mind utterly passionless, gazing with piercing transparency of vision upon truth ; but yet unimpelled by motives to any sphere of action whatever. A being thus formed might possess the most commanding intellect, but it would never be fitted to fulfil any destiny. To rouse a mind to action there must be feelings, emotions, desires, passions : by their means alone it is that it begins to exert its influence upon things around, and, stepping forth from the sphere of its silent contemplation, to live for a purpose as it regards the universe at large. The intellectual and the practical side of humanity, however, are not severed entirely from each other. Our emotions spring forth, in some mysterious manner, from our *ideas* or conceptions ; so that what the intellectual force pictures to the mind as *truth*, the emotive force reduces to feeling or impulse, and by that means at length to action. These explanations are by no means novel ; they are laws or principles of

our nature which many have already observed, many described ; in the department of ethics, especially, the dependence of our moral feelings upon the conceptions of right and wrong which precede them, have been repeatedly asserted and illustrated by the advocates of the intellectual theory.

It may be found, however, upon a closer investigation, that these two departments of our mental constitution run more parallel with each other than has been generally supposed. M. Cousin, in one of his lectures on the true, the beautiful, and the good, has hinted at this parallelism ; but not having carried out the idea to any great extent, he has left the subject fully open to future research, so that we need no apology for offering one or two additional thoughts upon it.

In examining, then, the phenomena of intelligence, we see a gradual progression from bare sensibility (the lowest intellectual process) to the very highest efforts of reason. We may easily detect the process in its various steps, if we imagine to ourselves an infant mind in its progressive development to maturity. That mind begins by experiencing a *sensation* ; and this sensation brings with it the first gleam of knowledge, for it announces the existence of some phenomenon, though of course it says nothing respecting the origin or the nature of it. Next, after sensation, comes perception. Here a primitive judgment is exercised, by which the phenomena of sensation are

all referred to a cause without us, to an objective world.

Thus far, indeed, the life of man and of the brute creation run completely parallel. The infant mind, however, expands still further. Having made itself acquainted with the external world, in its various forms, it begins to compare, to generalise, to combine; it observes qualities, and abstracts them; it indicates things by signs, and forms language; in a word, it shows all the marks of *understanding*, as we see it exercised in the various engagements of our outward life. Of this faculty, the brute shows but a feeble glimmering; just sufficient, however, to indicate the possession of it to a slight degree. But understanding is not all; the mind, thus far expanded, begins to look beyond the world of phenomena into that of realities; it oversteps the region of sensible into that of spiritual things; thoughts of God and of immortality occupy its deepest moments, until it rises to the loftiest attainments of human knowledge, and longs for the revelation of a brighter world. This faculty, it is almost needless to remark, is reason—the great prerogative of man alone.

Now, to each one of these different gradations of intelligence, we may see that certain gradations of sensibility precisely answer. To sensation on the intellectual side, answers *instinct* on the practical. These two, in fact, form the lowest step of both, that in which they seem altogether to unite; for

instinct is, as it were, *an impulsive or practical sensation*. To our perceptions, again, perfectly answer the lower desires and passions; those, I mean, which are shared alike by the man and the brute, and which arise from the nature of our physical constitution. The understanding to which we next attain, is the region of relations—that in which all the objects of the visible world are classified and arranged for logical use. Corresponding to this faculty we have the relational emotions, those which arise from the connexions in which we stand to our family, our friends, our country, and to human life at large. So far, man is not strictly an æsthetic, a moral, or a religious being; he has not yet transcended the region of sensible things, into the higher and more spiritual regions of thought and feeling. Reason conducts us into this higher world, it unfolds to us the existence of the true, the beautiful, and good; and corresponding to these as objects of contemplation, we have the æsthetic, the moral, and the religious emotions. Finally, just as the intellectual and practical life first start from one indefinable ground, where sense and instinct combine; so also do they terminate in one common elevation, where reason and the loftier sensibility blend together. This highest region of mental development is *faith*, the basis of all philosophy, whether it be sensational, mystical, or ideal. We may present these correlates to the eye in the following scheme:—

I. <i>Intellectual</i> ,		MAN'S LIFE IS	II. <i>Practical</i> ,
<i>comprehending</i>		FEELING	<i>comprehending</i>
a. Sensation,		to which answer	Instincts.
b. Perception, . . .			Passions.
. Understanding, . . .			Relational Emotions.
d. Reason			Æsthetic, Moral, and
		FAITH.	Religious Emotions.

Now in every one of the above gradations the intellectual state chronologically precedes the emotional, and is that from which the correlate emanates. Naturalists, for example, tell us that the remarkable impulse termed instinct arises from some *sensation* which is experienced by the animal in some portion or other of the bodily frame. When our passions again are roused, there is always some object from the *perception* of which those passions appear to originate. Further, the understanding must come into play, and give us a due conception of the various relations in life, before the relational emotions are excited. And, lastly, reason, at least in its spontaneous action, must unfold to us the beautiful, the good, the Divine, ere the higher affections are developed. This has been repeatedly acknowledged, both in morals and theology. There must be first the notions of right and wrong, and then the contemplation of some action, to which merit or demerit is attached, before any feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation can be evinced. In the same way our religious affections spring from

our religious *ideas*, and, just according to our conceptions of God, their great object, will be the feelings we exercise in worship towards him. *As a whole*, therefore, the intellectual man must be said to guide the practical man, the groundwork of all our emotions being found in our *conceptions*.

Such, however, cannot be said to be entirely and exclusively the case ; for these emotions, when once excited, react in their turn upon the intellect. They invest its ideas with new lustre and beauty ; they add intensity to all its operations ; and by their natural tendencies they often direct it in its researches after fresh truths. The result is, that in estimating the human mind as a whole, and giving their proper place to all the phenomena of its conscious existence, due stress must be laid both upon the intellectual and the emotional element ; if either side be left unappreciated, error will be the sure result.

Now the sensationalist and the idealist both neglect, to a great degree, the emotional element contained in our nature. The former, more frequently than not, confounds emotion altogether with sensation, making them both but different modifications of the same power ; while the latter too commonly confines himself simply to the analysis of reason, neglecting the reflex influence which the emotions exert upon it. On the contrary, the mystic goes exactly into the opposite excess. To him the emotions of the human mind are regarded as supreme ; so that, instead of allowing the intellectual faculty

to lead the way, it is degraded to an inferior position, and made entirely subservient to the feelings. Reason is in that case no longer viewed as the great organ of truth ; its decisions are enstamped as uncertain, faulty, and well nigh valueless ; while the inward impulses of our sensibility, developing themselves in the form of faith or of inspiration, are held up as the true and infallible source of human knowledge. The fundamental process, therefore, of all mysticism, is to reverse the true order of nature, and give the precedence to the emotional instead of the intellectual element of the human mind.

This, then, being the common ground of all mysticism, we have next to seek after the various forms which it assumes, and to make out as far as possible some classification of them. Cousin, in the lectures to which we before referred, has given a twofold classification of the different mysticisms grounded upon the two fundamental ideas, or categories, which lie at the basis of all human knowledge ; those, namely, of the finite and the infinite, of the relative and the absolute, of phenomena and substance. *Phenomenal* mysticism with him is that which actually transfers the phenomena of our inner self into the natural world, giving rise, first, to paganism, or the deification of nature, and then, as a natural consequence, to invocation, evocation, and theurgy. *Substantial* mysticism is that which imagines the infinite being to reveal himself immediately to the feelings of the human soul, giving rise to those extraordinary attempts (for which

some have been celebrated) at sinking down, in their inward contemplation, beneath the veil of mere phenomena, and gazing face to face upon God. In this classification there is unquestionably much truth and much ingenuity; as it is, however, too recondite and too subjective for our present purpose, we shall attempt another, which may better answer the purpose we have before us, that, namely, of describing the history of philosophy from a more objective point of view. We divide the various species of mysticism, then, into three classes. It arises—

I. When truth is supposed to be gained in pursuance of some regular law or fact of our inward sensibility; this may be variously termed a mode of faith, or of intuition.¹

II. When truth is supposed to be gained by a fixed supernatural channel.

III. When truth is supposed to be gained by extraordinary supernatural means.

We do not assert, that any one of these suppositions is *absolutely and uniformly incorrect*; nay, we are far from denying that knowledge cannot be communicated by all three of these methods to the human mind. The mysticism which attaches itself to such views lies in the belief, that some one of these three is the great, if not the sole channel by

¹ Faith, or the direct intuitive reception of primary truth, we have shown to be in fact the necessary basis of all fundamental philosophy, the point in which the higher faculties and sensibilities meet. Faith, however, may partake predominantly of the rational, or of the emotional element. In the former instance, it must be regarded as the foundation of the ideal; in the latter, of the mystical philosophies.

which we have to gain infallible truth. The former, it will be seen, is *par excellence* a philosophical mysticism, the two latter partake more largely of the element of religious mysticism.

I. We begin, then, with the first of these three modes of mysticism, that which supposes truth to be gained in pursuance of some regular law or fact of our inward sensibility. Here, of course, as in all philosophical systems, there is to be noted a progressive advancement from the milder to the more intense form, in which it makes its appearance to the world. The first step in the development of a new metaphysical school is often so insignificant, that we can scarcely perceive in what it really differs from those already in existence ; just as the first deviation of two lines which form an extremely acute angle can hardly be observed, while in their progress they soon become widely separated. Such is precisely the case with respect to the point, in which idealism and mysticism first commence to diverge from each other. The former accepts reason as the organ of truth, the latter faith ; but reason and faith, however they may stand apart as distinct phenomena in their ordinary acceptation, yet in their higher acceptation blend together like the colours of the spectrum, without our being able to say where the one ceases and the other begins.

Now the writer, whose works fill exactly this angle of our philosophical literature, is *Coleridge*. Our literary periodicals and reviews have teemed, for the last twenty years, with articles or observa-

tions upon the genius, the style, and the opinions of this our great poet-philosopher. To record anything here respecting his life and character, would be to repeat what almost every one already knows. His dreamy youth, his opening manhood, his collegiate life in Cambridge and in Germany, his wild purposes only created to fade away, his lecturings, his writings, his marvellous conversations, all have formed the topics of many a page and many a reminiscence. Waiving, therefore, all further allusion to these subjects, we shall now merely attempt rightly to estimate and determine the place which Coleridge holds on the philosophical stage of our country.

The philosophy which Coleridge was first *taught* must have been the sensationalism of Locke, as adapted to the wants and contingencies of modern times. The moral philosophy he heard at Cambridge, if indeed he ever attended it, was that of Paley; and strange must it have seemed to his profound and earnest spirit, then beginning to dive into the deeper world of speculation, to hear an unpoetical utilitarianism delivered from the post of instruction in that venerable university, where once Cudworth and More poured forth all the richness of their Christianised Platonism. No wonder that he craved after the more congenial minds of Germany; of Germany with its mystery, with its poetry of life, with its spiritual philosophy: and no wonder that the literature of that country, when he once knew it, exerted a mighty influence upon him

through the rest of his life—an influence which shows with what eagerness he gazed upon the new world of thought and of feeling, which was there opened to his wonder and delight.

Having mastered the principles of Kant, and looked into those of Fichte, Coleridge returned home with his predispositions to the higher metaphysics at once fixed and directed. Had he been brought up amongst the metaphysicians of Germany he would undoubtedly have been a German idealist of the true stamp; as it was, however, the commingling of his early education with the idealism of Kant and Fichte gave to his mind a tinge of mysticism, which was only heightened by his passionate love of poetry and æsthetics. To comprehend, then, the exact nature of this mysticism, (which is the precise object we have now in view,) we must first attempt to grasp some of the grand metaphysical principles, which our author laboured to establish.

Man is viewed by Coleridge as possessing (besides some minor ones) four great and fundamental faculties:—sensation, understanding, reason, and will. With regard to sensation, we find nothing in his writings that can be considered of any importance. The reality of our sense-perceptions was antecedently admitted by him, just as they were by Locke, Kant, and most others; in no case, that I am aware of, did he venture upon any transcendental theory to account for these phenomena, or dive so far into the spirit of idealism, as to deny

their objective validity. In proceeding, however, from sensation to understanding and reason, we soon get at one of the main points of Coleridge's metaphysical opinions. The distinction drawn between the *Verstand* and the *Vernunft*, in the philosophy of Kant, has been already explained at some length. Coleridge seized this distinction with great clearness, and, having done so, preached, defended, and illustrated it, with all the ardour of his profound and philosophic mind. The one he terms reasoning *by sense*; the other, reasoning *beyond sense*. The one is confined to the objects and relations of the outward world; the other, to those of the spiritual world;—the one relates to the forms, under which we view the finite and contingent; the other relates to the forms, under which we image to ourselves the infinite, the absolute, the eternal. This distinction, to which we have already so often referred, unquestionably underlies a very large proportion of Coleridge's philosophical theories. I will simply recall one passage from “The Friend,” (vol. iii. p. 202,) as an example of this peculiar feature of his writings. Speaking of the idea of pure being, he says—“The power which evolved this idea of being,—being in its essence, being limitless,—how shall we name it? The idea itself, which, like a mighty billow, at once overwhelms and bears aloft, what is it? Whence did it come? In vain would we derive it from the organs of sense; for these supply only surfaces, undulations, and phantoms! In vain

from the instruments of sensation; for these furnish only the chaos, the shapeless elements of sense. And least of all may we hope to find its origin or sufficient cause in the moulds and mechanism of the *understanding*; the whole purport and functions of which consist in individualisation, in outlines, and differencings, by quantity, quality, and relation. It were wiser to seek substance in shadow, than absolute fullness in mere negation." * * * After showing that the idea of pure being is, notwithstanding all this, a real one, borne witness to by the clearest light of our inward nature, he adds — "By what name, then, canst thou call a truth so manifested? Is it not a *revelation*? And the manifesting power, the source and the correlative of the idea thus manifested, is it not God?" How is it possible to show more clearly than this, the blending of our higher reason and intellectual sensibility in the one supreme principle of *faith*, as the organ of all primitive and fundamental truth?

Our author, however, has not only imitated Kant in reference to the general distinction between understanding and reason, but has also accepted his twofold division of reason itself into the *theoretical* and the *practical*. The one is reason, as applied to the comprehension of truth; the other is reason, as applied to the regulation of actions. Pure reason tells us what is necessary and real in existence; practical reason tells us what is incumbent upon us as moral agents. The one has to do simply with the intellectual man; the other has to do with the *will*.

All the moral philosophy, we believe, which the writings of Coleridge contain, ultimately rests upon the validity and the authority of the practical reason, as a categoric imperative, an indisputable law, formed to regulate and control human life.

The part of our constitution, however, which Coleridge dwells upon with the greatest delight, is *the will*. It had been the effort of sensationalism to identify volition with pathological and sensational phenomena; that is, to sink the personality of the human will in feelings arising from our nervous sensibility. Coleridge had drunk deep enough into the subjective spirit of Kant's philosophy, to see the complete futility of all such attempts: he learned there to look with an almost piercing intensity of vision into the native constitution of the mind, the original power of the *Me*; and applying this keen perception to the practical side of our humanity, he recognised in every man A WILL, a spiritual force (entirely distinct from his animal nature) given to him by God, to regulate his higher life. This will, accordingly, he regarded as the source of moral obligation, the germ of our religious being, the link by which our earthly nature is united to those higher natures, which evince a pure spontaneity for eternal holiness and love. These elements, therefore—the understanding, the reason, and the will—form the basis of Coleridge's metaphysical speculations. The view which he takes of them, though strongly marked, yet is by no means original; the counterpart of almost all

his notions on these subjects, is to be found somewhere or other among the German idealistic writers—the greater part of them in the philosophy of *Kant*.

So far, then, Coleridge is to be reckoned properly as idealistic in his tendency; and, had he stopped here, must have been classed as one of that school. Having carried on his investigations, however, up to this point, he proceeds to construct, out of the elements above mentioned, a new organ of truth, termed *faith*, by means of which a fresh light, unattainable by reason alone, is shed over the whole mind. Reason, according to Coleridge, blends with the will: in other words, the faculty by which we gaze upon absolute truth, unites with that by which we are conscious of our own personality; and from hence originates a new insight into the secrets of man's destiny both in time and eternity. "Faith," to use his own words, "consists in the synthesis of the reason and the individual will. By virtue of the latter, therefore, it must be an energy; and, inasmuch as it relates to the whole man, it must be exerted in each and all of his constituents, or incidents, faculties, and tendencies: it must be a total, not a partial—a continuous, not a desultory or occasional energy. And by virtue of the former (that is, reason), faith must be a light—a form of knowing—a beholding of truth. In the incomparable words of the Evangelist, therefore, faith must be a light, originating in the Logos, or the substantial reason, which is coeternal and

one with the holy will, and which light is at the same time the life of men."

From this passage it is evident, that the faith element enters decidedly into the higher branches of Coleridge's metaphysical system; that truths are supposed to be conveyed to us by its means, which could not come solely through the understanding or the reason, and that there is a mixture of mysticism, therefore, with his idealistic principles, showing itself particularly in the application of his philosophy to religion. At the same time, faith, as viewed by Coleridge, is not a distinct and independent faculty, but the blending of the higher faculties in *one*; so that his mysticism is of a kind which stands on the very verge of idealism, not daring to venture without the sight of the reason, nor choosing to trust itself to the *uncontrolled* suggestions of faith or of feeling.

The extraordinary value of Coleridge's writings, we think, must be fully admitted by every impartial mind. They form the first successful attempt of modern times, in our own country, to ground any of the great doctrines of Christianity upon a philosophical basis, without at the same time detracting aught from their peculiarly evangelical character. Added to this, they open a sphere of metaphysical thinking well adapted to counteract the objective tendency of our national philosophy, and to direct the mind to those lofty views respecting human nature and human destiny, which, in the turmoil of our

practical life, and in the want of a more spiritual system, we are so inclined to forget.

To estimate the mind of Coleridge *philosophically*, we should say, that most of his opinions and tendencies arise from the predominance which the ideas of *self* and *God* ever held in his intellectual being. The former idea led him to the deep investigation of the intellectual faculties, and the will; the latter led him to apply his metaphysical principles to the truths of religion. When, therefore, he found that the objects of religious contemplation transcended the powers of his rational nature to comprehend, immediately he sought to bring in the aid of his moral nature, and to construct out of the reason and will combined, another faculty, which should be adapted to the perception of these sublime truths. In so far as he has attributed to this new power of faith a super-rational capacity, must Coleridge be termed a mystic; but his mysticism, religiously speaking, only consists in attempting to explain by these means the scriptural doctrines which most men receive, simply upon the authority of inspiration. The influence of Coleridge upon the age has been, and still is, more extensive than many imagine. His works form just the turning point in the philosophical history of our country, in which the advancement of sensationalism came to a stand, and the tide of spiritualism began to return. That tide has since continued to deepen and increase, and we anticipate ere long the time, when England shall again boast a philosophy which is worthy the name,

and take its stand with France and Germany, as partner in the further development of abstract truth.¹

Another somewhat remarkable development of philosophical mysticism appears in the works of Thomas Taylor, the learned translator of Plato. This, we should say, is chiefly remarkable as being a complete revival of the ancient Platonism—a fresh establishment of it amidst the varied systems of modern times. The power of gazing upon the pure forms of all existence—of seeing the archetypes of all creation, reposing in the mind of Deity, we must regard as being a kind of intellectual intuition, sufficiently distinct from reason to warrant the appellation of mysticism rather than idealism, as distinctive of the system. The Platonic point of view we regard, indeed, as one step in advance of Coleridge: it not only advocates that kind of immediate intuition of truth—that gazing upon pure ideas, which Coleridge admitted; but it denies the possibility of rising to this lofty contemplation, while the mind is debased by the perpetual contact of material things. Listen to Mr Taylor's reflections upon this point—"The conceptions of the experimental philosopher, who expects to find truth in the labyrinths of matter, are not much more elevated than those

¹ The student of Coleridge, as a philosopher, should first peruse the "*Biographia Literaria*," from thence he may proceed to ponder over the "*Aids to Reflexion*." Next he may make acquaintance with "*The Friend*;" and not forget, at last, those few suggestive pages, which purport to be the "*Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit*."

of the vulgar ; for he is ignorant that truth is the most splendid of all things ; that she is the constant companion of the divinity, and proceeds together with him through the universe ; that the shining traces of her feet are conspicuous only in form ; and that in the dark windings of matter she left nothing but a most obscure and fleeting resemblance of herself. This delusive phantom, however, the man of modern science ardently explores, unconscious that he is running in profound darkness and infinite perplexity, and that he is hastening after an object, which eludes all detection and mocks all pursuit."

Coleridge would scarcely have proceeded to this extent. He would have asserted the combination of our best faculties into one supreme faith-principle, by which truth could be immediately conveyed to the mind ; but he would not have insisted upon the *renunciation* of physical investigation, and the absorption of the mind in Deity, as the only method of rising to the heights of true science. It is through advancing such opinions, that the name of Plato, even to the present day, stands on the threshold of almost every system of mystical philosophy.

The most remarkable phase, however, of this school of mysticism has been realised in the notions of JAMES PIERREPONT GREAVES, the friend, and for some time the coadjutor, of Pestalozzi. Mr Greaves was born near London, in 1777, and educated to mercantile life. On meeting with some reverses in

business, he went to the Continent, and spent some time at Heidelberg, where he gathered many of the rising literati around him, and first began to open his new and strange opinions. From thence he went to Switzerland, and lived ten years with Pestalozzi, engaging ardently with him in the work of infant tuition, and maturing still further his spirit-philosophy. On his return to England, he devoted himself to the improvement of popular education, and to spreading the views he had formed among his fellow-men. He died in the year 1844, beloved by many, and admired by a few.

To gain a clear conception of Mr Greaves' philosophy, is a matter of no ordinary difficulty; and still more difficult is it to explain it. The idea which lay at the basis of all his thoughts, seems to be the superiority of *being* to all knowing and doing. He considered that the great evil in life was *selfishness*, i. e., the regard to *individual* instead of general being; that before any improvement could be made, the inner man must be appealed to, and united with the love-spirit—the eternal and divine nature. His philosophy was, in fact, a species of spiritual socialism, in which all human natures were to be united and harmonised by the perfect submission of every soul to the law of love, and the passive yielding itself to the impulse of the spirit.

A memoir of Mr Greaves has been written by Mr A. F. Barham,¹ one of his friends and admirers,

¹ Mr Barham is himself a mystic philosopher. His system is

as an introduction to a volume of his private correspondence. I select the following passage from this life, as giving a very intelligible delineation of *the man* ; though we may not be so well able to grasp his views as a philosopher. "His mind was of a very ethereal, transcendental, and mystical cast, resembling that of Jacob Behmen, to whom he was fervently attached. This peculiarity in intellect, did not well accord with the mercantile business in which his earlier years were spent, and, after getting rich in commerce, he lost his fortune by imprudent speculations. On the settlement of his affairs, he went abroad, and became particularly intimate with Pestalozzi, and his educational system ; in short, Greaves was for years Pestalozzi's right hand man, and he first introduced Pestalozzi's books and methods into this country. It was during his residence abroad, that Greaves became profoundly initiated in the German and Swiss illuminism ; he also attached himself to the æsthetic or sentimental philosophy, on which Baumgarten, Kant, Richter, and Schiller wrote so eloquently. This æsthetic philosophy, long popular in Germany, Greaves endeavoured to promote in this country ; and he formed an æsthetic society, the only one I ever met with in Britain, which used to meet every week in his house in Burton Street.

termed *Alism* (from אל the name of Jehovah), and purports to view everything in the light of the Divine. His views are contained in a volume, entitled "A," which comprehends three numbers of a periodical termed *The Alist*, with other miscellanies.

“The divine reality to which Greaves ever directed was the life of God in man’s soul. He professed himself an *Alist* emphatically in my presence. He recognised, like Fénélon, Poiret, Law, and other mystics, an inspiring vital divinity, which he used to term the central spirit, or fountain of immortality within. It is almost impossible to describe aright the fervour and enthusiasm with which Greaves maintained the reality of the alistic and divine spiritualism. He professed that he realised it as actually present, as an element in life more intense than any imaginable electricity; and his faith in this spirit, by which he felt himself inspired, always preserved in him the most lively cheerfulness and freedom from anxious care. This was the more remarkable, as Greaves drank nothing but water, and ate only fruit and vegetables for many years before his death. He said to those who recommended him a grosser style of diet, that the central spirit always burned brighter and stronger in proportion to his abstinence from meats; nor was his joyous animation apparently depressed by a painful internal disease, which tormented him extremely, and finally brought him to his grave.”

We might go on to multiply our explanations of this mystical philosophy to an indefinite extent; but as the author seemed totally incapable of throwing his ideas into a systematic and logical form, we fear that the reader, like ourselves, would fail to grasp the essence of it after all. As, however, Mr Greaves has some followers and admirers, of whom

we may name Mr H. N. Wright in England, and Mr Alcott in America, who has already written many valuable thoughts on education, we must look forward to see whether there is really a germ of living thought lying under the uncouth phraseology with which we are scandalised ; and whether it can ever unfold itself to a system of philosophic truth. Meantime, we must request the reader, whose curiosity would prompt him to look into this form of modern mysticism, to consult "The Contrasting Magazine," published in 1827, a small volume, entitled "Physical and Metaphysical Hints for Everybody," "Thoughts on Spiritual Culture," and a pamphlet, entitled "The sentiments of R. Owen and J. P. Greaves contrasted." To attempt fully to explain the system which these works unfold, would be attempting to explain that of which we have never succeeded in gaining a clear conception ; we merely point out the above works as containing one of the most mystical of all the mysticisms of the present age.

II. The second mode of mysticism is that which supposes truth to be gained by a fixed supernatural channel. And, first, we must show the distinction between the mysticism we have now to consider, and the scepticism, based on authority, to which we made reference in the former chapter. In that case, it will be remembered, there was a formal denial of the validity of the human faculties ; truth, attainable by no other means, was supposed to flow by various channels from a primitive revelation of

God to man ; and the mind, well-nigh powerless in itself, was regarded as the bare receptacle of ideas coming to it from an *outward* source. In the mysticism now before us, there is, indeed, the same denial of validity to the intellectual faculties in their original state ; but by supernatural interposition, regularly and systematically supplied, they are imagined to be so enlightened and stimulated, as to apprehend truth—even such as lies beyond the reach of the natural man. We term the former scepticism ; because, on the hypothesis there made, the mind of man never becomes *per se* cognisant of absolute truth, but simply receives it through a given medium from an *objective* source. We term the latter, on the other hand, mysticism ; because the mind is made actually capable subjectively, of *acquiring* truth, but is conditioned for this process by supernatural agency.

This form of mystical philosophy has been maintained in our own country, chiefly by teachers of religion, some of whom have put forth sentiments on the subject sufficiently remarkable to demand our attention. Their speculations, as might be expected, refer rather to moral than to metaphysical truth, their object being to show, that a valid moral philosophy is impossible when the assistance of revealed religion is not embraced in the creation of it. We shall attempt, therefore, to give a brief analysis of the system, as it appears in the writings of one or two of its abettors.

And, first, we shall refer to a somewhat small

volume, entitled "Christian Morals," by the Rev. W. Sewell, M.A., formerly Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford,—a volume pretty extensively known, as containing the ethical system adopted by the Tractarian Theologians. In this work there is, undoubtedly, much to admire, but much also, as we think, to repudiate; much good reasoning, but still more unwarrantable assumption; many glimpses of truth, but still too many admissions of error. With the anti-sensationalism of the author we fully coincide, and have rejoiced in the stern rebukes with which he has met its shallow pretensions; but, with the exception of what bears upon this point, we can find very little that assumes a truly scientific character in the whole volume.

The object of the work, it should be understood, is to sketch out a complete system of ethics; to account for the existence of moral truth in the world; to explain the nature and growth of the moral emotions in the human mind. The author, almost at the outset, abjures all the attempts which a rationalistic or ideal philosophy is able to make, in order to do this; with equal decision he denies the claims both of eclecticism and syncretism;¹ and, having thus cleared the way, introduces at length his own theory on the subject. The essence of this theory may be stated in few words.

Man, by the very constitution of his mind, is

¹ Chap. 7, 8, and 9.

adapted to perceive certain relations, as existing between persons, just in the same manner, as by a primitive judgment we perceive relations between things.¹

The feelings, which arise within us, on the perception of them are instinctive, and, consequently, both universal and eternal.²

In this perception, then, and in these feelings, lies the primitive germ of our moral being.

Man, however, at his birth, is under the influence of a corrupt nature; the evil spirit has dominion over him; so that, instead of perceiving these moral relations aright, he views them distortedly, and acts, as the consequence, incongruously.³

All moral education consists in impressing upon minds the right knowledge of these relations; because from right knowledge of them, right actions will infallibly flow.⁴

This education begins in the act of Christian baptism; by which we are placed in an entirely new position with respect to moral evil, the heart being in that act regenerated, and the powers of evil exorcised.⁵

¹ Chap. 23 and 24.

² Page 349. "From whence do these ideas of relation come? They are implanted in us by *nature*. They lie dormant in the mind of every human being, are unalterable, eternal." In p. 381, however, the author says, that "We must learn both the relations, and duties consequent on them, from the witness appointed by God to reveal his will," and these are the parent, the king, and the Church. I cannot undertake to expound this jumble of Platonism and Hobbism.

³ Chap. 12 and 14.

⁴ Chap. 23.

⁵ Chap. 16.

The moral faculties being thus set right, they must be further enlightened, strengthened, and perfected by the instruction of the Catholic Church; by perfect submission to all its requisitions; and by the mystery of the holy communion, in which we become partakers of a Divine nature—the old man being crucified and dead.

In this manner the moral emotions become healthy and active; the dim undefined light of nature is no longer our guide; but we follow the road pointed out to us by the authorised teachers of Catholic Christianity, our faculties having been prepared beforehand rightly to receive and clearly to comprehend all their instructions.¹

These ideas, then, we select out of the mass of theories and opinions which come before us in the work under consideration, as containing the essence of its moral system. The whole, in fact, may be compressed in these few words. Man is born with a moral capacity, but in a confused and perverted state; the grace conveyed in baptism sets him morally right; and the living teaching of the Church has to perfect what is thus commenced.

Now, in the whole development of this system, however ingenious it may be, it cannot be concealed that the writer is aiming at a particular purpose, rather than investigating impartially scientific truth. The whole plan of it is so heterogeneous, that it could hardly have been formed in any mind without the influence of certain outward motives to mould

¹ Passim.

the opinions advanced into their fantastic shapes. It is with the greatest difficulty, indeed, that we can arrange the system, scientifically speaking, under any particular school. The first step in man's moral development, as our author views it, is grounded upon idealism,—it affirms innate moral powers and instincts. The next step is scepticism; for it affirms the fundamental disorder of these powers, and the consequent *impossibility* of gaining moral truth by them alone. The third step is mysticism; for by a supernatural agency, the nature of which is not very explicitly stated, the moral perceptions are all rectified in a moment, the spirit that haunted them exorcised. Lastly, with all the author's horror for eclecticism and syncretism, yet we find him culling from Plato, from Aristotle, from the Christian fathers, as well as all the different philosophical schools of modern times, to which we have just alluded. Let any one compare the ethical philosophy of Jouffroy (the great eclectic moralist of France) with the work now before us, and say in which lies the least eclecticism and the greatest unity, both of design and of execution. We doubt not, but that any impartial and scientific judge would give the palm in this respect to the former.

With the idealism, and, to a certain extent, with the eclecticism of Mr Sewell (for eclectic he assuredly is) we can fully sympathise; they harmonise perfectly with the principles we have maintained throughout this whole work: with his scepticism and his mysticism, however, we entirely disagree.

Let us turn our attention for a moment to his *scepticism*. The principle upon which this proceeds is shown, first of all, in the contest that he undertakes against rationalism. The author here attempts to repel and to pour abundant ridicule upon the attempt, which some philosophers have made, to form for themselves a system of ethics simply by the exercise of their own reason. Moral truth, derived in this way, he considers as synonymous with "*the fancies of individual men*," and strives to prove that, whatever may be viewed upon this ground as right one day, may be proved wrong the next.

To bear out his assertions on this point, he takes some two or three *parallel* (!) illustrations from the experimental sciences—as geology, chemistry, &c. ; as though it followed, that, because men cannot form right conclusions on these matters without the aid of the observation and testimony of others, therefore they cannot do so in the case of abstract and necessary truth. Why, the argument of the idealist is constructed to meet this very objection. He contends that there are certain principles of eternal and immutable truth in the world ; that, while empirical facts must be gained by observation, by diligent colligation, and by the testimony of others on the same points, there are certain foundation-truths, which rest upon the necessary constitution of our own minds, and for the pledge of whose validity we need no second opinion. Might not the "*dear little original independent thinker*," whom the author chuckles over, perchance discover, that

the angles at the base of an isosceles are equal? Might he not haply rear up a whole edifice of mathematical truth without the least fear, that what he discovers to-day may prove wrong to-morrow? Now idealism contends that there are axioms of metaphysical, of moral, ay, and of theological truth, too, which are quite as certain as those we have just mentioned. The only proof of the validity of mathematical axioms and deductions, is, that they express *necessary* relations, which our reason, constituted as we have it, can never reject; and precisely the same proof is at hand to verify the fundamental laws, both of moral and of metaphysical philosophy. Here, as well as in mathematical investigations, we discover principles which appeal at once to the human consciousness, and which possess that mark of *necessity*, which raises them altogether above the reach of mere observation, or the province of external testimony. Let men beware how they tamper with these primary laws of human belief; let them beware how they allow scepticism to plant its first step within the region of our rational convictions: once undermine the power and validity of our faculties in their application to the grounds, either of metaphysics, morals, or religion, and the catholic testimony of the whole Church will not save the most precious truth we possess from refutation and ruin.

Again, the author's scepticism shows itself in the effects which he regards as flowing from the corruption of human nature. His theory is, that this

corruption prevents us from viewing moral relations aright; and that the evil cannot be rectified without the rite of baptism and the aid of the Church. What is here involved, we would ask, but a perpetual paralogism? The *duty* of belief, the *duty* of submission, the *duty* of entire trust to authority, is reiterated and asserted to satiety; but whence, it is demanded, does the *obligation* of exercising such belief and such submission flow? My friend over the way, perchance, was never canonically baptised; he has never had the mysterious influence supposed exerted upon him; he has never sat at the feet of a Catholic, or Anglo-Catholic priest; his moral nature, therefore, is unsound; he cannot possibly view the relations of duty aright. On what ground, then, do you urge upon him the *duty of belief*? He has not, on the hypothesis before us, the capacity to feel it to be a duty. Words to him are nothing: for there is no correct moral sensibility to work upon. Talk not of his sin, his pride, his resistance of law, his rejection of God's authorised teachers; if his fundamental notions of moral obligation are perverted, duty is to him, in comparison with a baptised person, a nonentity. In brief, if those without the Catholic Church are left so perverted, that their moral nature does not act aright within them, then all argument to bring them to the pale, all attempts to prove them wrong, must be unavailing: the only course must be to cajole them to the font, and having regenerated them, then, at length, to appeal to their renewed hearts. Whilst, however, the

moral faculties are all twisted, in the name of consistency do not blame them for a want of belief, the obligation of which they are morally incapable of perceiving. Again we say, to deny the validity of a man's moral faculties, and then to affirm him wrong in not performing the moral act of belief, implies a paralogism in reason, and an absurdity in practice.

Into the author's *mysticism* we should be tempted to enter far more largely, were we writing on theological principles rather than those of speculative philosophy. As, however, we certainly regard it entirely out of place, in a work pretending to scientific rigour, to advance so loosely and affirm with so little proof, as our author has done, the reality of sacramental efficacy, so we should be stepping out of our own track in marshalling any arguments, derived from Scripture or experience, which may lie against it. But extraordinary it certainly appears to us, that any one should accuse man's instinctive moral convictions of *indefiniteness*, and then appeal to an abstraction, called the Catholic Church, to obtain a scientific system of ethical truth in which this indistinctness should be rectified. Let any one consider the mass of conflicting opinions, both on religion and ethics, which has been held by the visible church in different ages; let any one consider the difficulty of deciding which out of this whole mass must be Catholic truth and which the incrustation of error; let any one look round him now, and see how many authorised teachers of

the Church itself are giving completely contradictory views on the same points, and those of fundamental importance; let any one, in fine, estimate the difficulty and uncertainty of historical inquiry reaching back into remote ages, the chief monuments of which have perished in the wreck of time, and then say, whether he is willing to rest the fundamental principles of moral obligation upon this basis.

The whole work is in fact a feeble imitation of the modern French Catholic school of philosophy. When the authors of such works have so vast an amount of authority as is presented by the Catholic Church to back these arguments, there is at least some semblance of argument, especially as addressed to a catholic people. But for the advocate of one small school out of the whole mass of Protestantism to set up the plea of universal authority, and that too grounded on his own sectarian interpretation of the Christian doctrines,—this is indeed an exhibition over which the Gallican Catholic may smile, but the English Protestant will only be inclined to mourn.

Leaving, therefore, the Anglo-Catholic system of ethics, we go on to notice another form in which this same species of mysticism is sometimes advanced, and that is, when the authority of the Bible is substituted for that of the Church. I might mention Dr Wardlaw's "Christian Ethics" as an instance of that to which I am now alluding; in which it is maintained that human nature is too perverted morally ever to arrive at pure ethical

truth without the influence which the revealed word exerts upon the mind. Here, as in the other case, there is a principle involved, which, if consistently maintained, would strike at the root of all moral obligation. For, not only must our personal responsibility on this hypothesis be diminished, but even religion itself must lose its foundation and its force, when once the sanctity of conscience, as an inward law, is disowned. All religion rests upon the existence of a God, infinitely just and holy, as well as powerful and great; but of what use were it that the moral perfections of Deity should be displayed in the world around us, or in the written word, if we had no correct moral sensibility, to which these manifestations might appeal? Unless there were a standard of right within us, we could never *conceive* of holiness or moral perfection as the attributes of the Supreme Being; and, wanting this conception, religion would be a nonentity.

The influence of depravity falls primarily upon our *dispositions*. Indisposition towards what is holy may divert our thoughts from moral truth, and weaken our conceptions of it; then, the conceptions being weakened, the moral emotions will be less intense. But never can sin invert or disturb the great principles of man's moral nature. Conscience may be *seared*, but never *deranged*; it may cease to speak, but it will never turn upside down the great relations of good and evil. Moral *approbation* will ever follow the perception of what is esteemed right; moral *disapprobation* the per-

ception of what is esteemed wrong. Were we to suppose it to be otherwise, man would not only be placed beyond the region of responsibility ; but there would be a moral impossibility that he could ever be taught the sacredness of virtue, or the turpitude of vice. Just as no teaching could convey the notion of salt or bitter, if sensation were deranged, so, also, no course of moral instruction, not even a revelation itself, could ever give us the perception of good and evil, if our moral sensibilities were thrown into confusion.

III. We come now to consider the third mode of mysticism, to which we have alluded ; that, namely, which supposes all truth to be gained by extraordinary supernatural means. This, of course, must be regarded simply as a species of religious mysticism, held, for the most part, by those who make but little pretension to philosophical investigation. It results frequently, for example, from an exaggerated view of the Scriptural doctrine of Divine influence. Not a few earnest believers in Christianity, with a mistaken desire of enhancing the value of revelation, would have us to suppose, that all absolute truth must be communicated by the special operation of the Spirit upon the mind. Man, it is argued, is blinded by sin, his reason is beclouded, he cannot understand revealed truth though it blaze forth in the clearest light from the sacred page ; but a special enlightenment comes over him, and then truth becomes plain and obvious.

In this system, we see simply the exaggeration of

a great theological doctrine. That the eternal and infinite Spirit should communicate with those finite spirits, which are emanations from its own essence, is philosophically probable, and theologically certain; but far is this from justifying the sweeping conclusion, that *all* absolute truth must depend upon such especial communings of God with man. To the *spiritual* nature of man, indeed, they may be all in all; but God has not left him so irresponsible as it would be implied that he really is, were he entirely dependent *intellectually* upon the extraordinary communications of spiritual influence, in order to view truth aright. That direct intercourse with God is permitted, and that it answers a purpose infinitely important in human destiny, we fully believe; but assuredly it was never intended to supply the place, or to contravene the duty, of our own intellectual effort. As these phenomena, however, come more under the idea of religious than philosophical mysticism, we shall now, having indicated their existence, forbear to pursue them any farther.

To sum up, then, our remarks upon the modern mysticism of England in few words, we would remind our readers that the errors which it contains are all errors either of *defect* or of *exaggeration*; and that every form of it really contains some germ of truth at the basis, to which it owes its existence. Look at the first form. That truth may stream in rays of beauty upon the mind, through the medium of our inward sensibility, (since all our affections

have their appropriate object) we can hardly entertain a doubt; but when sensibility is substituted for reason, and raised to a position superior to it in the development of our knowledge, then there is an error admitted, which only needs a little unfolding to produce the wildest fancies of the philosophical mystic. Again, to adduce the second form—we should be far from denying that there is such a thing as a fixed supernatural channel, by which God reveals his will to mankind; for the Bible, as we regard it, is such a channel, and so also is the Church. But when the Bible on the one hand, or the Church on the other, is raised up as an authority upon the *ruins* of human reason, we cannot but think that a suicidal act is virtually committed, inasmuch as if the validity of reason is undermined, the possibility of proving the authenticity of revelation itself is for ever destroyed. Lastly, to adduce the third form of mysticism, we do not reject the illumination of the soul of man by especial outpourings of Divine influence; but we contend that such influences relate to man's *religious* progress in his probationary state, and are not to be regarded as the channels for conveying to any mind either physical or metaphysical truth. Mysticism, in fact, within its due limits, expresses what is true and sacred; beyond those limits it becomes a vain and a pernicious assumption.

SECT. II.—*Modern Mysticism in France.*

France is a country by no means favourable to the rise or the growth of mysticism. In no other nation of Europe is the *understanding* so perfectly developed as there. In none is the higher reason, generally speaking, developed so *imperfectly*. As a consequence of this, sensationalism has long been, and still is, the philosophical system of the mass; and although a strong reaction has set in, it has not yet worked long or powerfully enough to raise the minds of many into that lofty region of thought, which is chiefly accustomed to be swept by the clouds and vapours of mysticism. France is the country of clear, transparent, mathematical thinking. Its language is of all others definite; its idioms of all others most logically correct, and least poetical. In vain do we search in France for the poesy of England, or the deep, mystic, and reflective spirit of Germany. Extravagant romance may be sufficiently at home there, both in literature and in life; but the spiritual nature, the spring of what is greatest in humanity, is too often untouched.

The stirring scenes of the Revolution, and the expectations which it raised throughout the world of the coming regeneration of human society, directed the thinking minds of France more particularly to the *philosophy of social life*; and it is in this department that speculations nearest bordering

upon mysticism have made their appearance in that country.

The name of St Simon is well known as heading a band of political regenerators. The system, however, which he originated, embraces not only the details of a new social constitution, but some other doctrines, which demand a little consideration under the present section. The mystical element, we should premise, does not attach itself to St Simonism in its *principles*, so much as in its details and its *spirit*. However rational the grounds of any system may appear, yet when its advocates separate themselves from the rest of the world, as some superior race; when they adopt a peculiar garb and dress; when they announce a great crisis in the world's history, and promise a complete regeneration of human society of which they are themselves the precursors; it is hardly possible to withhold from such visionary enthusiasts the charge of mysticism. St Simon not only attempted to introduce new social principles, but a new Christianity. Moses, it was said, had promised to men a universal fraternity. Jesus Christ had prepared it: St Simon has realised it. In him the universal Church at length appears, in which the whole man, socially as well as individually, is embraced.

Claude Henri Count de St Simon was born at Paris, A.D. 1760, of a noble family. At an early age he went to America, and served in the republican army. There his first ideas of a new state of society were formed; and when he returned to

France, instead of taking any part in the Revolution, he gave himself up entirely to the realisation of his cherished plans of social reform. In 1814 he published a tract on the "Reorganisation of European Society." Other works on the same topics followed in quick succession : at length, poor in resources, and neglected by his countrymen, yet to the very last urging his few followers to go on in the path he had opened for them, he expired A.D. 1825.

After the death of the apostle, strange to say, the doctrines he had lived for became suddenly popular. Many of the first men joined the ranks of his disciples ; and his principles were powerfully advocated in the "Producteur," and even to some extent in the "Globe." Around these elements a school of social science was soon gathered. The sentiments it upheld were publicly taught ; books were written to defend them ; journals published to advocate them ; and even missionaries were sent forth to preach the new faith throughout Europe. At this juncture, the civil authority interfered,—the school itself, erected upon a very shallow foundation, suddenly fell, and after a brief but brilliant career, passed away like a dream.

St Simonism comes before us as a system at once of religion, philosophy, and government—one, too, by which professedly all the ills of humanity are to be removed. That those ills are at present fearful both in character and extent, all are ready to admit ; but there are few who can understand the source

from whence they arise. Their real source, says St Simon, is to be found in the total and universal want of *social unity*. Human life has now no common principle, no common ideas, no common aim. Individualism rules throughout society; each man has his own views, and follows his own purposes; so that the body politic, which ought to be working harmoniously in all its parts, is given up to virtual anarchy and confusion.

Philosophy and religion have both attempted to remedy these evils, but in vain. Sensationalism and idealism, though presenting many a fine-spun theory, have been practically worthless; moral systems have proved equally empty and futile. Religion, though it has done its part, yet has never assumed its highest form—that in which the spiritual is made to bear upon the material interests of mankind. The real gospel of social happiness has yet to be proclaimed.

The true philosophy, as also the true religion for man, is to be sought for *historically*; to find it, we must attempt to deduce the law of human development, both as regards religion and society; in this way only can we interpret the past, comprehend the present, and predict the future. Whatever elements, moral, intellectual, or religious, we find operating upon human nature in the progress of its development, these are the *real* elements with which philosophy has to do.

St Simon's doctrine, therefore, gives a philosophy of *minds*, rather than of *mind*; it presents a science

of humanity as a whole, rather than of human nature in its isolation. This *principle* is one to which no real objection, that we are aware, can be made; nay, we regard it as a most important branch of philosophy, to trace the mental progress of mankind in the world. All the mysticism attaching to it in the present instance arises from the enthusiasm with which the law of development was proclaimed, as a divine discovery of the new prophet, and as a substitute for all philosophy, all politics, and all religion for the future.

And what, then, is the law of development, by which humanity marches onward to perfection? Society, according to St Simon, has shown two great phases or epochs, which, in long cycles, have alternated with each other. The one is the *organic* epoch, the other the *critical*. Under the former, society is always bound together by some general law—all its facts regulated by some great theory. Under the latter, all law and theory is broken up; unity of action ceases; and individual interests go on clashing with each other. This alternation has already taken place *twice* in the history of humanity. The ancient pagan period was an organic state; the breaking up of paganism the critical. This led to the second organic period, by the consolidation of human opinion under the power of the Catholic Church; while the second critical epoch, commencing with the Reformation, found its climax in the French Revolution. St Simon considered himself raised up to announce the advent of a *third* organic

period, now just at hand, in which war, confusion, discord, shall all cease, and man be united by the triple bond of a moral, intellectual, and industrial perfection.

The same law of progress, which history shows us on the broad surface of human society, is seen under another point of view, in the successive features of man's religious belief. Religion has appeared under four different aspects ; that of Fetishism, of Polytheism, of Monotheism, and lastly St Simonism. Under the reign of Fetishism, cruelty and fear reigned universally throughout society—it was the age of cannibalism, man devouring man, society preying on itself. Polytheism was an advance upon this state of barbarity ;—the sentiment of humanity began to dawn ;—slavery took the place of Islamism, and the foundations of the social edifice became visible. Monotheism, both Jewish and Christian, succeeded. Slavery now gave way to national institutions ; the spirit of *love* began to expand itself over society at large, and the principle of selfishness to be resisted. Christianity, however, while accomplishing these glorious results, has chiefly aimed at the spiritual education of man, and has not yet operated directly upon the building up of his social and temporal happiness. So far from that, the spiritual and material are put into a state of antagonism by it ; which, however necessary as a critical era in the progress of truth, yet gives rise to a thousand immediate evils. We await, then, the last and perfect organic form of the religious life in the world ; that

in which the temporal and material interests of man shall be blended in one, and social life find its perfection in the full expansion of religious truth. In this state of society there will be a due provision for education, legislation, and religious worship. Every man must be a producer, and every class of producers must have its own proper sphere of action. Priests of religion, men of science, and the industrial classes, these will form the whole mass of society. The most eminent of the three divisions will form the aristocracy—the whole together will form at once the church and the state; and the great principle of action will be, *each man according to his capacity, and each capacity according to its work*. Such are the broad outlines of the St Simonian doctrines.¹ Inadmissible as they appear in their original form, they have, notwithstanding, proved very suggestive to many active minds; and stand, in fact, at the vestibule of a school of social enquiry, which is now actively engaged in bringing forth many remarkable results.

The social system which now holds by far the most prominent place in France, is that of Charles Fourier, (born 1772, died 1837.) It is a very common, but a very erroneous opinion, that Fourier's system sprang from the St Simonian doctrines. It is well known, on the contrary, that the main points

¹ Abundant materials exist in France for studying the St Simonian system. The best works to consult are, "Doctrines de St Simon," (Paris, second edit. 1829,) and an "Exposition de la Doctrine Saint-Simonienne," 2 vols.

of it were clearly developed in the mind of the author so early as the year 1779; and in the year 1808 he published his "*Théorie de quatre Mouvements*," which was many years before St Simon had produced the least impression upon the world. The fact is, that many of the St Simonian school, after the death of the founder, adopted portions of Fourier's phraseology, and that, at the dissolution of it, some of the ablest writers came over to the other system. This may, probably, have given rise to the notion, that the phalansterian doctrines were affiliated upon the St Simonian.

For many years after the publication of his first work, Fourier excited no attention; his only friend and follower was M. Just Muiron, who, impressed with the grandeur of his views of society, entered warmly with him into the task of propagating them. In 1822 Fourier published his "*Théorie de l'Unité Universelle*," which was succeeded by the "*Nouveau Monde Industriel et Sociétaire*," and "*La fausse Industrie*." These works, though giving a very full, and even learned exposition of his doctrines, yet are written in a style so strange, and a technology so unusual, that it is not to be wondered at that they produced but little effect upon the public at large. Fortunately for the credit of the system, it succeeded in engaging the eloquent pen of M. Victor Considérant; to him were added from the ranks of the St Simonians, M. Abel Transon and M. Jules Le Chevalier. After the death of Fourier accordingly, in 1837, the school began to organise

itself; and the doctrines it maintained began to spread amongst many thinking minds in France. A journal entitled "La Phalange," which had been instituted in 1836, advocated, and still advocates the views of the society with great spirit; and within the last year or two a daily paper, "La Démocratie Pacifique," has been entirely devoted to its principles and interests. The school is at this moment, we believe, greatly on the increase: the "bulletins" for the last three years show, at any rate, a vast accession both of money and men.¹

Our readers may now be interested to understand something of a system, which confessedly constitutes a "great fact" in the literary history of the present day; for although it appears prominently as a *social theory*, yet being grounded in metaphysical principles, it can be viewed, strictly speaking, as a complete system of philosophy.

First of all, then, according to Fourier, it must be admitted that reason is to man an *organ of truth*. Without this admission, all philosophy, nay, all human knowledge, is worthless. But reason grasps not truth at once. Starting from a few fundamental principles it makes many tentative efforts, falls into many errors, and yet in the main advances.

¹ An attempt was made to introduce the system into England by Mr Doherty, who published for a short time the "London Phalanx." While this has disappeared in England, the literature has been vastly increasing in France. I have before me a catalogue of more than thirty separate works, advocating the phalansterian system.

So it was, for example, in *astronomy*, until the true law of gravitation was established, when all became plain. So it is with regard to *society*; theories of socialism can be only tentative until the real law of human nature is eliminated; but then society will become harmonious.

As the foundation of all science, we must raise our minds to the contemplation of *God*. Everything within and around us proclaims the existence of a supreme being of infinite intelligence, wisdom, and goodness. From him all creation has flowed forth; and all must, therefore, bear upon it the impress of his own divine and harmonious mind. Experience proves that this is the case, for nature is full of harmony. Music is a manifestation of divine harmony; the colours of the spectrum afford us another manifestation of it; wherever we look, the same great feature of the divine nature is exhibited.¹

Man was made in the image of God; he is the mirror of the universe. As such, there must be in human nature at once the purest harmony, and the highest unity. To suppose otherwise, would be absolutely derogatory to the wisdom, the power, or the beneficence of the Creator. Evil, it is true, *exists*, but this may be easily explained. Suppose a me-

¹ See "Nouveau Monde Indust." p. 445. Also, "Solidarité," by Hippolyte Renaud, chap. ii. and viii. Throughout all his works, Fourier draws frequent illustrations from *music*, to which he had been early passionately attached.

chanic to construct a beautiful machine, and some bungling workmen were to throw it into confusion, should we say that the fault were in the machine, or in the ignorance of the workmen? Of course the latter. So it is with humanity. As made by God, it is a perfect and harmonious construction; and the source of all evil is to be sought for in that widespread ignorance, which, without comprehending human nature aright, throws it into false positions, and puts all its fine-strung harmonies into discord.¹

The great thing, then, is to study *man*:—to study him by the purest light of our reason; to bring to bear on the investigation all we know of God, the Creator, and all the analysis of creation at large. The study of man comprehends two fields of research,—that of his *history*, and that of his *constitution*. History shows us humanity passing through a succession of phases, answering to the *infancy*, *youth*, *adolescence*, *virility*, and *old age* of the individual, and termed by Fourier, Edénisme, Sauvagerie, Patriarcat, Barbarie, Civilisation. In these several eras, we see the principle of union gradually developing in connexion with the rise of the arts and sciences.

The next step in human progress, must be that in which the present system of individualism prevalent through society shall be broken up; in which the

¹ “Solidarité,” p. 25.

true law of society shall be discovered; in which men shall find their highest interest and happiness in the public weal; in which the happiness of the individual and the community shall be absolutely identified. This state is termed that of *harmony*.¹

To understand this state, and the means of attaining it, we must become acquainted with man in his nature and constitution. Upon the knowledge of these, Fourier's whole social system depends. Man is in himself a trinity, a compound of three principles.²

1. The Passions—Active or motive principle.
2. The Body—Passive principle.
3. Intelligence—Regulative or mathematical principle.

The *body* is the mere organ or tool of the man. *Intelligence* gives the rules or laws of all movement; and the *passions* are the sole causes which impel the will to action.³ The real man, then, is to be studied in the *will*, and in all the passions (*i. e.* motives) which determine it; to understand man, therefore, aright, we must endeavour to grasp the whole of the principles of his activity, and comprehend the mechanism of his passions.

These have been discussed by Fourier with great acuteness and precision. As there are three parts of the human constitution, so, he considers, there

¹ "Nouveau Monde," sec. vi. and vii. ² "Solidarité," p. 38.

³ The term *passion* is used by Fourier to signify *any inward motive whatever*.

are three classes of passions, representing three ruling tendencies or attractions. 1. There is the tendency to physical enjoyment, (*tendance au luxe*,) and this is satisfied through the sensitive passions; namely, taste, smell, sight, hearing, touch. 2. There is the tendency in man to form into groups with his fellow-man: this tendency is supplied by the affective passions, which are friendship, ambition, love, and domesticity. 3. There is the tendency to series or rank. Men not only form into groups, but different groups seek to attain a different rank or standing in society, thus creating a regular system of *series* or degrees from the lowest to the highest. This tendency is served by three passions—emulation, agreement, and diversity; for men of different ranks will stand affected to others by rivalry, by sympathy in their views, or by the love of change. These are termed by Fourier, “*la Cabaliste*, *la Composite*, and *la Papillonne*—forming the distributive, as the others formed the affective passions. The whole of these springs of action thus tend to create perfect harmony in society; for just as nature has taken care to balance the numbers of the sexes, so also does she distribute men of different tendencies in such a way, that the whole of the passions shall be in equilibrium, and perfect unity be the result, forming, as it is termed, the pivot around which the whole revolve.

The following table will give a clear idea of the whole analysis:—

PIVOT-PASSION. GENERIC PASSIONS.		RADICAL PASSIONS.	
Unity or Harmony.	α Tendency to Luxury or physical enjoyment.	1. Taste.	} Sensitive.
		2. Smell.	
		3. Sight.	
		4. Hearing.	
		5. Touch.	
	β Tendency to Groups.	6. Ambition.	} Affective.
		7. Friendship.	
		8. Love.	
		9. Domesticity	
	γ Tendency to Ranks or Series.	10. Rivalry.	} Distributive.
		11. Concord.	
		12. Diversity.	

Of these twelve radical passions, the four affective are the cardinal, like the four notes in the octave, which form the main chords ; the three distributive answer to the other three notes, which form the subordinate chords ; while the five sensitive, answer to the five semi-tones, which complete the twelve parts of the chromatic scale.¹

Such, then, are the elements of human nature, such the materials with which society has to be constructed ; we can now proceed, therefore, to consider the *organisation* of social life. Humanity is at present like a splendid organ, entirely out of tune. Harmony exists not, for each man is individualised in his interests, and stands in a kind of antagonism to all the rest. Moral purity exists not ; for the passions not having their natural sphere of action, become contorted or extravagant, and lead into every species of crime. Happiness and liberty

¹ Vid. Solidarité, p. 47.

exist not ; for of what use is it to have freedom inscribed upon the parchments of the empire, when the man is a slave to a labour, which is totally at variance with his tastes and attractions? For the passions to exist in a state of harmony and equilibrium, society must be constructed on rational and philosophical principles ; each attraction must have its satisfaction, and the tendency to vice must be repelled, and overcome, not by punishment and restraint, but by the happiness each man will find in following out his proper destination.

A community of 400 families, comprehending about 1800 souls, is considered by Fourier sufficient to carry out his plan of society. Such a community he terms a *Phalange*, and the palace in which they reside a *Phalanstère*. The *Phalange* is to be built in a peculiar form, containing dwelling houses of different sizes, gardens, workshops, and everything necessary for the conduct of social life. It is to stand in the centre of an area of about a league square, which is to be cultivated for the benefit of the community. The cattle, fruit, flowers, &c., which are reared on the estate, will supply the five senses with objects of satisfaction, and administer to the physical necessities of the inhabitants. Next, the affective passions are to be consulted. Friendships will be formed between those who have a natural attraction for each other, uninfluenced by the sordid motives which society now presents. Ambition will find an ample field for exertion, and men will unite into groups to carry out their plans.

Love will unite the sexes in perfect harmony, when all selfish interests in the shape of property, &c., cease to be consulted. And, lastly, the family circle will have all its charms without its anxieties and its cares. Such will be the primary grouping of mankind, when these affections are left to their natural play.

But now the distributive passions will come into play. Men have different tastes. Some will follow agriculture, some gardening, some commerce, some domestic duties ; while others will choose education, literature, science, or religion, as their favourite employment. Every man will be at liberty to enter whatever group he pleases, or to change his occupation as often as he may desire ; but assuredly, as every man finds his happiness alone in activity, he will do *something*, where everything lies open to his choice. Some will be incited by *rivalry*, others by *sympathy*, while all may enjoy *variety*. The property of the community will consist of capital, labour, talent. These will all be rewarded proportionally to their value ; the whole community will partake of the benefit of what each member affords, and a state of harmony will ensue, which, while it gives employment and support to all, will excite all to emulation, and give a stimulus to commerce, science, and literature, such as, under the present state of things, it is utterly impossible to realise. Diversity of rank there must ever be ; for while there is harmony in nature, there is no such thing as *equality*. Every man, however, will have

the opportunity of realising wealth, honour, esteem, and even power, exactly in proportion to his talent and his industry.

It is vain for us to attempt entering into the details of the Phalansterian community. Doubtless they must appear very utopian, as here described; but the genius and benevolence of the author of the system, certainly afford good reason for giving an attentive ear to his suggestions, since much may often be learned even from a theory, which appears to be only dictated by the boldest enthusiasm.

Fourier, to complete his philosophy, carried his principles at length into the highest regions of human thought. Under the title of "Cosmogony," he pushed his researches into the spiritual nature of man, showing his unity with God, and with the universe at large. Under the title of "Universal Analogy" he attempted to carry his laws of harmony into the various realms of nature; and thus to make discoveries which, to the method of induction, would have been for ever *impossible*. Some of his school are now carrying on similar researches, and applying the numerical laws we have referred to, to the questions of physiology, language, and religion. Having just indicated, however, the main principles of his system, *as a philosophy*, we must be content to point out the works, by which our readers may enter, if they choose, into the details of the Phalansterian doctrines.¹

¹ The student of Fourier should begin by some of the simpler writings of the school, as the "Exposition Abrégée," of M. Consi-

Many of Fourier's doctrines upon cosmogony, upon the spiritual body in man, upon metempsychosis, upon the details of universal analogy, are, we believe, regarded even by many of his followers as extravagant and theosophic. It should be remembered, however, that he only put them forward as *speculations*, not as scientific facts. What he regards alone as strictly scientific, is his analysis of human nature, and his theory of social organisation. On these subjects, however, there are some points very unsatisfactory. His doctrine of evil, though containing some truth, is far from probing the mischief to its centre. There is a perturbation in human nature which needs a Divine cure, before holiness and happiness can result from its being left to the play of its natural attractions. I know we must separate, as Bishop Butler does, between the original constitution of man by God, and his super-added sinful tendencies; but those tendencies demand something more potent than a Phalanstère, to bring the heart right, and purify the conscience. Till this is done, society may present an outward paradise, but there will be all the elements of hell itself within the soul. Another point that wants great consideration, is the analysis of the passions. If that be imperfect, the credit of the whole system

dérant. He will be highly interested by M. Cantagrel's Dialogues, entitled, "Le Fou du Palais Royal." The best synthetical view of the system, is that entitled "Solidarité," by M. Renaud. After these works, he may proceed to the writings of Fourier himself, particularly the "Nouveau Monde Industriel." A life of Fourier has been written by M. Charles Pellarin.

is broken down. But we are not yet prepared to admit, that the science of human nature has been at once begun and completed in the person of Fourier. That he merits the title of great genius and great philanthropy, must be admitted; but he has added only *his* portion to the noble edifice of human science. Much that he has written will pass away into oblivion; but the truth he uttered (and he uttered much) will mingle up with the mass of our knowledge, when the system, *as a whole*, has vanished for ever, like a splendid dream.

In the above sketches of St Simon and Fourier, we have given the two main social systems of modern times. As schools of philosophy, they are both marked by the use that is made of the historical element. Both have regarded mankind as being in a state of perpetual progress; and it is this idea of progress (one which is also shared by the Eclectic school) which has given a distinctive feature to every system, that has aimed primarily at illustrating the philosophy of social life. On the contrary, the theological school we have described under the title of Scepticism, advocating, for the most part, the doctrines of absolute power, have rejected the idea of progress, as involving all the errors of pantheism in theology, and radicalism in politics; and maintained the existence of a fixed and unalterable standard of eternal truth.

There is a class of writers, however, which take their stand midway between these two ideas. Convinced, on the one hand, of the reality of human

progress, still they recognise the existence of a body of traditional truth, which has come down upon the stream of time, from the earliest ages to the present day. Of these writers, some regard the traditionary element as being *the universal consent of mankind*, of whatever period or of whatever religion; others, on the contrary, regard it as belonging more particularly to the Christian revelation, either in its preparatory forms or its subsequent development; but both unite in recognising the reality of *progress* as the law of human nature. The former of these schools is represented by M. Pierre Leroux; the latter, by M. Buchez.

M. Pierre Leroux was one of the ardent and aspiring minds who studied first in the school of St Simon. In 1824 he became one of the originators and first editors of "The Globe;" and it was probably owing to his influence, that that remarkable journal savoured for some time so strongly of the St Simonian doctrines. Since the disappearance of St Simonism, M. Leroux has assumed an independent position, attempting to centre in himself, as far as possible, the results of the eclectic psychology, the traditional element of the catholic philosophy, and the historical speculations of the sociologists—a position truly of no little difficulty, but one which his metaphysical acumen, and his universal learning, eminently qualified him to assume.

About the year 1833 he commenced, in conjunction with M. Renaud, the composition of the "Encyclopédie Nouvelle," (as yet incomplete,) in

which many of his philosophical and religious opinions are somewhat fully developed. Since then, there have appeared from his pen, a "Réfutation de l'Eclecticisme," in which he has attempted to develop the true idea of philosophy; an "Essai sur l'Egalité," in which he defines and illustrates the modern notion of humanity, as being one united organisation of labour and interest; a little treatise entitled "De la Doctrine du Progrès Continu," and, finally, an elaborate work "De l'Humanité, de son Principe, et de son Avenir."¹ It is from this last work, as being the résumé of his former opinions, that I shall give the following account of his philosophical stand-point.

The great object of M. Leroux's philosophy is *Man*. It attempts to determine what he is, what is his destination, what his rights, what his duties, and what his law. The psychological schools of philosophy since Descartes have laboured at these questions, but laboured unsuccessfully. Their point of departure has always been *the me*; in this they have expected to find all truth embodied; to the individual reason they have applied for the solution of every fundamental problem. To say that their labours have been altogether vain, would be incorrect, for many results have been gathered up on the way; but still they have totally failed of getting upon any solid ground, or of educing any satisfactory result. What, in fact, is *the me*, what is the in-

¹ M. Leroux is also united with Mad. Dudevant in the editorship of the "Revue Indépendant."

dividual reason? A mere abstraction, a fiction of philosophy, which has no real existence.¹ No man can regard *self* as an independent creation, containing an independent revelation of truth. Every separate mind, and every individual reason, only exists as part of a vast whole, as a link in that great series, the totality of which we call *humanity*. The thoughts, feelings, beliefs, principles, which each man recognises in himself, do not spring up originally in his individual mind; he receives them as a part of the universal truth of mankind. Had he lived earlier, he would have had other thoughts; those who live later, will have others again. The me, then, or the individual man, must hold a very subordinate place in the investigations of philosophy; the great point is to study *mankind*, to know what it has been, what it is, what it will be hereafter.

This investigation, according to M. Leroux, all comes under *the science of life*. The individual reason may discover formal or mathematical truth; but to study *man*, we must cast our gaze upon the whole flow of *human life*; and here only can we make discoveries which can be of any value as elucidating his nature and destination. The origin of humanity lies beyond our reach, the end lies equally beyond it. All we see is a certain number of links in the centre of a series, of which we know neither the commencement nor termination, and these form the whole material of our scientific research. The

¹ "De l'Humanité," p. 113.

direct object of philosophy, therefore, is to gain a complete view of the catholic tradition of mankind, so far as history can reach ; secondly, to determine its progress in the past ; and, thirdly, from this to deduce its continued progress for the future.¹

M. Leroux having thus explained the nature and objects of philosophy, takes the individual man as his starting point, and as being to us the necessary link with humanity at large. And what is the individual man? A being alone in time and space, isolated from all the other creation? Is he an animal only? or is he a soul? None of these definitions or ideas will come near the truth. What shall we say then? “L’homme n’est ni une âme, ni un animal; l’homme est un animal transformé par la raison, et uni à l’humanité.”² The ancients defined man as a social and political animal, and so far they were correct ; but history since then has taught us more. It has taught us that man is perfectible, that society is perfectible, that the human race is perfectible. It has taught us that by social combination the evils of the world may be overcome, that all the antagonism of society may cease, and that the interests of all may become solidified in the very structure of social life. This alone can bring about human happiness, and this has been the very point to which society is ever tending. “Yes,” exclaims our author, “Plato says truly—We gravitate to God, attracted by him who

¹ *Vid.* “De la Doct. du Progrès Humain.”

² “De l’Humanité,” p. 120.

is the sovereign beauty, by the loving and rational instinct of our nature. But just as the bodies placed on the surface of our earth do only gravitate towards the sun all together, and as the attraction of the earth is, so to say, only the centre of their mutual attraction ; so we gravitate spiritually to God, by the intervention of humanity.”¹ Such is the compendium of the whole history of philosophy.

In prosecution of these views, M. Leroux has devoted himself with great ardour and learning to historical research. He has investigated the relics of ancient tradition, laboured to gather up the testimony of mankind in all ages upon the idea of God, of immortality, and a future life ; and attempted to show that Christianity is the regular development of the catholic truth of the world upon these points. As, however, the law of progress still remains in force, the conceptions of Christianity will give way to a more perfect religion. What the future will be, we are at present ignorant ; but we are labouring for it. The tradition of Europe will be handed down to the next generation, and, as is ever the case, the science of the present will become the basis of the religion of the future.

Such are the main ideas of the philosophy now under review. Like the system of St Simon and of Fourier, it looks only upon the more outward features of human nature ; expects the creation of a state of earthly bliss from the improved arrangements of human society ; passes by the real ele-

¹ “ De l’Humanité,” p. 120.

ments of evil and of suffering which lie deep in the core of the human heart; and, in consequence, mistakes the whole nature, genius, purport, grandeur, and divinity of Christianity. So far as such speculations bear upon social life, they assume a genial, a benevolent, and a beneficial aspect; they teach us what Christianity has taught them—the principles of charity, peace, and human brotherhood. But they comprehend not the deep philosophy of the Christian revelation, which aims at the regeneration of society, only through the regeneration of the human soul. In brief, neither of the three systems we have reviewed, can be honestly cleared of the charge of *pantheism*; and hence they virtually involve the fatalistic conclusions to which all pantheism inevitably leads.

M. Buchez, like Pierre Leroux, had his philosophical ability first awakened in the school of St Simon, and, like him also, has since its disruption assumed an independent position. Like all the minds which received their first impulse from the doctrines of sociology, he has taken his stand upon the idea of human progress, and sought for the solution of his philosophical problems from the phenomena of history. In his “*Essai d'un Traité de Philosophie*,” he attempted to explain every great philosophical question from a moral point of view, considering that they find here their most satisfactory solution. It is, however, in his “*Introduction à la Science de l'Histoire*,” that he has pursued his own peculiar doctrines with the greatest fulness and originality.

In the prolegomena to that work, he begins by giving a picture of the evils under which mankind is now groaning, and shows that it is the province of history to reveal the real function of human society. In the first book he enters at once upon the *science* of history, which is defined to be "that which enables us to see the social future of the human race in the order of its free activity." This science turns upon two ideas: 1. That of humanity, and 2. That of *progress*. Humanity, philosophically viewed, is the *function* of universal order, the highest expression of the Divine ideas. Progress is the *law* of universal order, a process in the nature of man analogous to that which we see in every part of the whole creation.

The second book brings us to the *method* in which the science of history is to be pursued. A valid science may be said in any case to exist, when we have so far discovered the law of the case, as to foresee the future with precision and certainty. This leads to a very full and acute discussion of the law of the generation of social facts, in the determination of which he has brought to his aid the notion of progress, the logical development of ideas, and the tendential movements of society.

The third book is on social *constants*, those great features of humanity which remain ever the same amidst the perpetual changes of human opinion. These refer to *morals*—the Divine law of our free activity to art, to science, and to *labour*.

The fourth book is one of great interest; refer-

ring to the affiliation of all the different branches of human knowledge, and showing how the idea of progress may be made the basis of a complete Encyclopædic arrangement of them.

The fifth book is occupied with speculations on the origin and natural history of the globe we inhabit, while the last two books, entitled "Androgenie," discuss the creation of man and the different revelations by which he has been instructed by God, and rendered fit for the high destiny to which he has been called.

This may give a general idea of the plan and the purport which M. Buchez has kept before him in this remarkable work. While on the one side the idea of progress is his guiding star, yet it is evident, from his general style of remark, that he has been led near to the Catholic doctrines of Christianity, and finds in them the germ of all the notions which it is the aim of philosophy to evolve from the phenomena of universal history. The method of philosophical investigation thus determined, has been pursued by several other writers of considerable ability. M. J. F. A. Boulland has followed it up by an "Essai d'Histoire Universelle, ou Exposé comparatif des Traditions de tous les Peuples," and a similar work, entitled "Histoires des Transformations Religieuses et Morales des Peuples." Dr Ott also, to whom we have before referred as a commentator upon Hegel, has joined himself to this school in his "Manuel d'Histoire Universelle."

The only additional author we shall notice as be-

longing to the modern school of French mysticism, is M. Ballanche. This voluminous writer was born at Lyons in 1776, and during the first twenty years of his life was the almost constant prey of the most painful afflictions. Endowed by nature with a mind of high sensibility, warmed by the rays of a vivid imagination, and chastened in spirit by the cup of suffering, M. Ballanche gradually developed a character of singular excellence and beauty. During his earlier years of literary activity he devoted himself almost entirely to poetry, or the higher order of sentimental prose composition; but about the time of the Restoration, he was led, probably by the political circumstances of the country, into the region of philosophical thinking. Beside the prolegomena to some of his poetical writings, he has developed his views on the philosophy of society in two distinct works, the one entitled an "Essai sur les Institutions Sociales," the other entitled "La Palingénésie Sociale."

In the former of these works he treads in the footsteps of M. de Bonald, regarding *language* as a primitive revelation from God, and containing the primary germs of all truth. To this theory of M. de Bonald, however, he has appended the idea of *progress*. The primitive tradition, couched in words, presented truth in a very material and symbolical form, and it was only preserved and spread by the ancient myths and poems, by which the early tribes handed down their wisdom from age to age. After a time, writing was invented. Truth now be-

came, as it were, embalmed in signs; and just in proportion as it lost its character of poetic inspiration, it gained in reflective clearness and certainty. *Now*, truth is not only spoken and written, but is also *printed*. Here, again, it is held up still more distinctly to the contemplation of the *reason*, which still struggles on to comprehend the ideas which lie about it, and will continue to do so till it brings them into the broad daylight of a philosophical deduction. The great mission of these ages in which we live, is so to interpret the revelation which we have in the Christian tradition, that it may mould all the features of human society, and bring humanity to a state of purity and peace.

The "Palingénésie Sociale" also advocates a primitive revelation, and shows how man has departed from his original state of purity, the golden age of the poets, into a state of sin and consequent suffering. The plan of God, developed through the ages, is to restore man to his original state, to perfect him by means of the perfection of his social institutions, until the law of the Gospel becomes the law of the whole world.

"Then shall the reign of *mind* begin on earth,
And, starting forth as from a *second birth*,
Man, in the sunshine of the world's new spring,
Shall walk transparent like some holy thing."

Thus we see M. Ballanche holds the balance almost evenly between the theological school of De Maistre and Bonald on the one side, and between

the progression—and perfectionists on the other. “He is, in fact,” remarks M. Damiron, “of the same faith as M. de Maistre, but of altogether different feelings; having greater tenderness for his brethren, greater sympathies, and better hopes. If he has not indeed the wing of the eagle, still he is without its stern look, its pitiless cry, its thunder ever ready to strike. In a region less high, but more serene and calm, he goes like the dove, scattering ever on his way sentiments which do not trouble, and words which console. In his eyes humanity is not destined *never* to be good except by fractions, to have eternally its plebeians and patricians, its weak and strong, its righteous and wicked; from day to day it will extend the circle of its influence, and will evangelise the multitude, and at last will be entirely good and happy.”¹ Such, according to M. Ballanche, is the origin of truth, as far as man is concerned; such is its republication, such its progress, and such its final issue.

SECT. III.—*Modern Mysticism in Germany.*

Germany is a country in which mysticism has ever found a somewhat congenial resting place. Religious mysticism, for example, has often exhibited there some of its most remarkable phases. Even Luther himself, the great religious hero of the coun-

¹ Damiron's “*Histoire de Phil.*” vol. ii. p. 368.

try, may be said to have shown a decided tendency to it in several features of his character ; and modern times have not wanted instances still more marked and decisive. It is not our intention, however, to dwell, even for a moment, upon the *purely religious* mysticisms of Germany, as this would carry us too far from the proposed object of the present history ; our purpose will be simply to delineate, as clearly as possible, the *philosophical* mysticism which that country has originated during the present century. This course is rendered the more satisfactory, because philosophy and theology, in Germany, more than in any other part of the world, delight to go hand in hand ; so that mysticism in religion, as it exists there, is for the most part but the application of philosophical mysticism to theological questions.

In describing any particular department of the modern philosophy of Germany, we must always revert to the Kantian period, as that from which it has taken either its origin, or its chief tendencies. In order to carry our readers back, then, for a moment, to that period, we would remind them, that Kantism contained in it a twofold element. On the one hand, Kant admitted the objective validity of our sense-perceptions ; and herein consisted his realism : on the other hand, he made all the peculiar features of these perceptions dependent upon the subjective laws of our own understanding ; and herein consisted his idealism. The expansion of the idealistic element we have followed through the writ-

ings of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and the respective schools to which they gave rise; the realistic element, on the contrary, was that upon which Jacobi linked his speculations, and from which he originated his profound system of philosophical mysticism. It is from this system that all the German mysticism of the nineteenth century, which is worthy of notice, has regularly flowed.

Frederick Henry Jacobi was born at Düsseldorf, on the 25th of January 1743. In the eighteenth year of his age he went to Geneva, and studied under some of the most celebrated professors in the different departments of mathematics, medicine, and philosophy. On his return to Düsseldorf, his first object was to devote himself to the mercantile profession; but being soon after appointed to an office under government, he gave himself up for the most part to public affairs, residing at a country seat at Pempelfort, and occupying his leisure hours in philosophical researches. Metaphysical speculation was always his favourite employment—an employment, too, which, far from viewing as a mere amusement, he entered into with the most intense earnestness.¹ Prompted by his love for philosophy, and justified by his position in society, he entered into extensive correspondence with many of the first scholars and writers of the age; and this fact, perhaps, may in some measure account for the wide and rapid influence of his literary productions.

It is recorded that the perusal of Kant's tractate on the proofs for the being of a God, produced in the young philosopher the most violent palpitation of the heart.

As an author, it was never Jacobi's intention to develop any connected system of philosophy; his works are all of a brief and somewhat temporary character (*Gelegenheitschriften*), to which he was impelled by circumstances, rather than induced by the systematic development of his speculative opinions.¹

His first publication consisted of a series of letters on Spinoza, addressed to his friend Moses Mendelssohn (1785). To this Mendelssohn replied, and thus drew forth from Jacobi a second publication, intended to establish his statements respecting both the fatalism and atheism of Spinoza's principles, and to vindicate the assertion he had made, that every system of logical dogmatism inevitably tends to the same point. In the next year (1786), Jacobi wrote a treatise, entitled "*David Hume—on Faith, or Idealism and Realism*," a treatise which we may compare with Reid's polemical writings, taking due account of the different schools to which the Scottish and the German opponent of scepticism belonged. The immediate object of this work, however, was to answer the outcry which had been raised against him, for the assertion he had made, that all our knowledge must rest *ultimately* upon faith, and *not* upon reasoning. In 1799, he published some letters to Fichte, in which he opposed the "empty formalism" of his philosophy; another treatise, "On Divine Things," and various articles in the philosophical journals, com-

plete the list of his strictly metaphysical labours. A perfect edition of Jacobi's works in six volumes was published, partly from his own direction, by his friend Friedrich Köppen, containing, beside the above mentioned treatises, two philosophical romances, an interesting selection of the author's correspondence with Hamann, and an introduction to his philosophy by the editor.

Jacobi came just at the period when some attempt at founding a mystical philosophy was naturally to be expected. The energetic idealism of Kant had swept away, after a manful struggle, the pretensions of empiricism, throughout the whole country; and, not content with that, had given a manifest opening to the revival of a profound scepticism, such as we have already noticed in Schulze. Sensationalism, idealism, and scepticism, therefore, had all three been engaged in the struggle to which the giant of Königsberg gave occasion; and now mysticism stepped in to assert its claims also to the reverence and the confidence of mankind. Hamann had, some time before, attempted to found a system of faith-philosophy, and Herder to graft his results upon the metaphysics of Locke; but it was Jacobi who first brought the faith-philosophy into repute, and, by his profound genius, as well as elegant taste, raised it to a position, in which it was enabled to contest the supremacy with the other philosophies of the age and country.

One of the first things we observe in the writings of Jacobi, is his deep-rooted aversion to those formal

rationalistic systems of metaphysics, for which Germany, especially, had been famous. He assailed the Wolfian school, the pantheism of Spinoza, and all other dogmatical systems of a similar kind, with a force and perseverance amounting almost to rancour. To comprehend the method of this opposition, is by no means a difficult matter. All knowledge, he affirmed, communicated to us through the medium of the understanding, (or the logical faculty,) must be of a contingent character, and can never attain the marks of the universal, the infinite, the purely philosophical. To *demonstrate* any truth, we must infer it from another, that lies beyond it; this, again, from another still more general; and so on, to an infinite series. The human *understanding*, therefore, can never get beyond a series of conditions; it can never rise to first principles; never reach that point where truth is known, and gazed upon by a direct intuition of the soul. Hence, he shows that the philosophy which is grounded simply on the understanding, and which attempts to define and demonstrate all things, necessarily leads to fatalism. The philosophy of Spinoza he regards as the complete type of these demonstration-seeking systems—systems which can never really transcend the finite and the conditioned—never attain to the absolute and real; and, consequently, never consistently admit a Deity, except in that pantheistic sense, which regards God as the totality of finite and conditioned existence.

“It has been,” he remarks, “since the time of

Aristotle, the increasing striving of all philosophical schools, to make immediate knowledge secondary to mediate ; to make the original perceptive capacity, which grasps all things directly, secondary to the reflective capacity, which is conditioned by abstraction ; to make the prototype secondary to the type—the essence to the definition—and intuition to understanding ; yea, to make the former altogether vanish in the latter. Nothing is allowed to hold good by these philosophers, except what admits of being proved, yea, twice proved, by turns, in the intuition, and in the conception—in the thing itself, and in its image or its name ; so that in this last alone the thing itself is supposed to lie, and to be really seen.”¹

To these kind of remarks, the dry and formal definitions of the Leibnitzian-Wolfian philosophy had certainly given abundant occasion. It seemed to be imagined by the adherents of that school, that no sooner could anything be defined by the rules of logic, than its whole nature was determined. Jacobi, impressed by the folly of this procedure, opened a campaign against all dogmatical systems whatever, and, with great ingenuity, drew the conclusion, that a purely demonstrative philosophy, as it has no first principles to rest on, must lead to scepticism and absurdity.²

The philosophy of Kant he excepted from these

¹ Michelet, “Geschichte der neuern Syst.,” vol. i. p. 346. See also, Jacobi’s “Werke,” vol. i. Introduction, p. 11, *et seq.*

² These results are brought out with great force in the “Letters on Spinoza.”

sweeping objections, although he did not consider even this to be by any means fundamentally sound. He admitted, that that great thinker had effectually opposed the dogmatical systems of the day; that he had shown their futility, in his *theoretical* philosophy; and pointed out the road to truth, in his *practical*: but still he objected to him, that, having once admitted the validity of demonstration, and, by its means, having undermined the arguments on which our belief in God and immortality rests, he could not consistently restore by his practical movement what he had destroyed by his theoretical. It was evident to him, that some more fundamental principle was wanting; something to furnish a basis for Kant's demonstrations, and to give validity to his practical conclusions.¹ This principle, then, he asserted to be *faith*—the direct inward revelation of truth to the human mind.²

The true idea, then, of Jacobi's philosophy lies here:—that all human knowledge, of whatever description, must rest, ultimately, upon faith or *intuition*. As it regards sensible things, the understanding finds the impressions, from which all

¹ "Werke," vol. ii. p. 17, *et seq.*

² In the earlier treatises which Jacobi wrote, (those which related more immediately to Spinoza,) he made constant use of the terms Glaube and Offenbarung, to designate the immediate knowledge we gain of primary truth, in opposition to that which is *logically* deduced. The use of these expressions first drew on him the charge of mysticism; but it is right to point out the fact, that he afterwards employed the term Vernunft to express the faculty of immediate intuition, which he had before explained as a *revelation*. On his use of the term Vernunft, see "Werke," vol. ii. p. 55—81.

our knowledge of the external world flows, ready formed. The process of sensation itself is a mystery; we know nothing of it, till itself is past, and the feeling it produces is present. Our knowledge of matter, therefore, must rest entirely upon our faith in these intuitions. There is, however, another and a higher species of faith than this. Just as sensation gives us an immediate knowledge of the world, so there is an inward sense—a rational intuition—a spiritual faculty—by which we have a direct and immediate revelation of supersensual things. God, providence, freedom, immortality, moral distinctions, &c.—these are things which come not to us by demonstration. We gaze upon them by the inward eye; and have just as firm conviction of their reality, as we have of those material objects upon which we look with the bodily eye. It is by this twofold faith or revelation, that man has access to the whole material of truth—material which his understanding afterwards moulds into various shapes, and employs, on the one hand, for the purposes of this life; and, on the other, for preparation for the life to come. Leave out, however, this direct inlet to our knowledge, and all demonstration, all definition—in short, all philosophy is but a sport with words; a superstructure sometimes complete enough in itself, but baseless as the most airy visions of the imagination.¹

It may now be easily seen, how Jacobi linked his views of philosophy upon the realistic principle of

¹ “Werke,” vol. iv. Die Lehre des Spinoza, Pt. i.

Kant. Kant admitted, without proof, the reality of our perceptions: here, then, was the faith-principle already in operation, and only needed some additional fencing against the encroachment of the ideal element, to give it its due weight and importance. While Kant, therefore, supposed the sense-perception to be a subjectively formed phenomenon, in which, not indeed the thing itself is represented, but simply the existence of an objective reality declared, Jacobi affirmed the object of our perceptions or of our faith, to be a real and adequate intuition of the outward reality; so that he completely fortified this part of our mental constitution against the sweeping results of the rising idealism. He showed, in brief, that in every perception there is something *actual* present (Princip der Thatsächlichkeit,) which can never be explained away into the operation of our own subjective laws and faculties.

From this principle of actuality in perception, Jacobi proceeded to establish the same with reference to the higher conceptions of the reason. Here, too, he had the example and authority of Kant for his method of procedure. Kant, it is true, in his critick of pure reason, had viewed both the understanding and the reason as simply formal or logical faculties, from which no actual material of knowledge could possibly come; and, on this ground, had removed the notions of God, of the soul, of substance, &c., as objective realities, beyond the bounds of philosophical truth. But he allowed the

validity of those great moral conceptions of Deity, of immortality, and of rectitude, which come to us through the medium of the practical reason. To the latter principle, accordingly, Jacobi appealed. He contended, that the conclusions of the practical reason were as valid, philosophically, as those of the pure reason; and that the one was as much the organ of scientific truth as the other. Following out this mode of argument, he was led to view reason itself (*Vernunft*) as an inward sense—a direct revelation of spiritual things, upon the actuality of whose intuitions there is as much dependence to be placed as upon those of the senses.

In brief, Jacobi, at a time when idealism seemed preparing to sweep away all the great and recognised boundaries of human knowledge, stood forth as the apostle of realism—a realism which rested upon faith in our direct intuition of truth, whether human or divine. “He showed,” says Chalybäus, “that there is something more in our soul, than a dead and empty mechanism of logical thinking and shadowy representations; he reassured us of a deeper, and, as yet, an inviolable treasure in the human spirit; and, although this boon be hidden in the sevenfold veil of Isis, yet has he powerfully excited us to the investigation of it, by pointing to the reality of so precious a germ. He himself, indeed, thought, (and herein lies his mysticism,) that, if we would not sport it away, we must preserve this germ, without exercising a sinful curiosity; that it happens to every one, who ventures to

enter this sanctuary with the torch of demonstrative knowledge, as it did to the youth before the veiled image of Sais ; for that every complete and scientific demonstration could only lead to Spinozism.”¹

Without entering more particularly into the details of Jacobi’s philosophy, we shall conclude our remarks upon it by the following beautiful and significant passage from the pen of Hegel :—

“Jacobi,” he says, “is like a solitary thinker, who, in the morning of his day, found some ancient riddle, hewn upon an eternal rock. He believes in this riddle, but he strives in vain to guess it. He carries it about with him the whole day, allures weighty sentiments from it, spreads it out into doctrines and images, which delight the hearer, and inspire him with noble wishes and hopes ; but the interpretation fails ; and in the evening he lays him down, with the hope that some divine dream, or the next waking, will pronounce to him ‘*the word*’ for which he longs, and on which he has so firmly believed.”²

Jacobi’s style of writing is so chastely poetical, and yet so philosophically accurate, that it has often been compared to that of Plato, and is regarded by many as a model for imitation. As a thinker, too, Jacobi is despised by none. Even the Hegelians themselves, so severely logical in their theory, and so supercilious towards those who disagree with it, have repeatedly acknowledged his services to the

¹ “Entwicklung,” p. 54.

² “Vermischte Schriften,” vol. i. p. 203.

cause of philosophy. From Jacobi we must begin to date the introduction of a new element into the German metaphysics, that of *feeling*; an element which, if it had not been before altogether disowned, still had never been looked upon in the same manner as an organ of truth.¹

The path, however, being once pointed out, a number of philosophical thinkers, and some of no ordinary character, began to discuss more fully the respective claims of feeling and intelligence as sources of human knowledge. The relative position assigned to each was very different in the different systems which were now propounded. Some placed faith or feeling in the foreground, as Jacobi most decidedly had done; others made it only secondary. Some, again, tried to show how the two elements co-operated equally in the creation of our ideas; others to prove that they both flowed from the same fundamental principle. Of these, very few, of course, could be strictly termed followers of Jacobi, and even those few kept by no means close to their master; the majority had belonged already to some other school, and being struck with the importance of many of Jacobi's ideas, were anxious to combine them with the principles they had before imbibed. Frederick Köppen and Jacob Salat are the only two

¹ As aids to understand Jacobi's philosophy aright, the student may consult the "Introduction," printed in the second volume of his works; Schlegel's "Charakteristiken und Kritiken;" Hegel's review of his philosophy, contained in his "Vermischte Schriften;" Michelet's "Geschichte," vol. i. p. 339; and Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," Sec. iii.

we can at present recall, who may be properly termed the successors of Jacobi in the advocacy of his faith-philosophy; the others must be regarded as seeking to unite this philosophy with that of Kant, of Fichte, or of Schelling; oftentimes adding original suggestions of their own. In following, then, the fortunes of this new element of *feeling* (whose introduction upon the stage we have just shown), we shall notice three classes of advocates, whom we may characterise as grafting the faith-philosophy of Jacobi respectively upon the idealism of Kant, of Fichte, and of Schelling.

1. The writers to whom we ventured to give the appellation of Jacobian-Kantists, are Bouterwek, Krug, Fries, and Calker.

Bouterwek (born 1766, made professor at Göttingen 1791, died there 1828) began his philosophical career just at the time when the writings both of Kant and Jacobi were in the flush of their fame. From the former he learned that there is a realistic ground which lies at the basis of all phenomena, and without which all thinking is simply a logical play upon empty terms and notions: from the latter he learned that, in addition to the external senses, there is an inward sense (whether it be termed faith or feeling) by which all real objective existence, of a spiritual or rational nature, is communicated to us. Hence he concluded that whether we direct our attention to thought or to feeling, there must be a real basis, a "*seyn*," from which they equally spring. This basis, he argued, can neither be found by thinking nor by feeling, as these are both

subjective phenomena; but there must be an absolute knowing-faculty (Erkenntniss-vermögen), by which it is immediately revealed to us, and out of which, as the ultimate ground, both thought and feeling spring forth. The science of this primitive faculty, and the knowledge which arises from it, Bouterwek terms *Apodiktik* (from ἀποδεικνυμι), an expression which he found it convenient to use, in order to make clear that primary fact of consciousness, which bears the type neither of feeling nor thinking, but lies deep at the very foundation of both. In order to make this apodiktical starting point sufficiently broad, Bouterwek lays down three primary facts of consciousness to which it is to be applied, and these are *thought*, *knowledge*, and *action*. We have accordingly three divisions of *Apodiktik*, termed respectively, the logical, the transcendental, and the practical. In the logical *Apodiktik*, the author seeks the absolute basis or principle of thought *per se*, and shows that the very fact of thinking implies a *reality*, both in the subject and object. To investigate this *reality*, is the problem of the *transcendental Apodiktik*, the result of which is, that we must admit an absolute, a primary essence, as the constitutive principle of all things. This has been termed by some, a negative Spinozism.

The real nature of *the absolute*, lastly, is only found in the practical *Apodiktik*, which shows us that the most intimate and essential conception we can have of all *being*, is that of a *power*, or rather a *virtuality*, by the action and reaction of which all

things consist. Such was the original philosophy of Bouterwek, as developed in his "*Idee einer allgemeinen Apodiktik*." In some of his late works he altered his views on the foundation principles of human knowledge, so as to bring them far nearer to the faith-philosophy of Jacobi. Throughout his whole career, indeed, he was floating in uncertainty between the two principles of faith and reflection; sometimes tending to the one, sometimes to the other, and ever struggling to discover some common ground which might unite the claims of both.¹

Bouterwek had placed thought and feeling very nearly upon an equality, varying as to the degree of preponderance he would assign to each. In the writings of Krug (born 1770, since 1808 Professor at Leipzig, died 1842), to whom we next advert, we have another instance of this kind of mixed metaphysical system. Krug began by attempting to furnish a new critical philosophy, in which the true method of metaphysical investigation should be better shown, and the full extent of the human faculties sounded. This was accomplished in a work, entitled "*Sketch of a New Organum for Philosophy*," published at Meissen in 1801, in which he shows that true philosophy arises from

¹ The chief philosophical work of Bouterwek may be considered that above mentioned, the "*Idee einer allgemeinen Apodiktik*," (1799.) The one of next importance is the "*Lehrbuch der Philosophischen Wissenschaften*," (1810.) The "*Religion der Vernunft*," (1824), is interesting, as containing the most obvious modification of his original system.

turning our contemplation inwards, and searching into the facts of our own consciousness. In the consciousness, he affirms, subject and object, knowing and known, thought and existence, are *absolutely united*. Beyond this synthesis, as a fact of our own observation, we are unable to reach; for *there* is the ultimate bound of all metaphysical research. (Transcendentaler Synthetismus). Should it be attempted to penetrate beneath this fundamental fact, and deduce either knowing from being, or being from knowing, the only result which can follow will be materialism in the one case, and idealism in the other. The sole ground on which we can take our stand, is that of the following fixed and unalterable convictions:—first, that I am; secondly, that there is an existence out of myself; and thirdly, that the two exist for each other. In this threefold conviction, all our absolute knowledge is grounded. In his next work, entitled “Fundamental Philosophy,” he develops more at large the nature of human knowledge, and draws the distinctions which he thinks warranted, between the various organs that subserve the acquisition of it. *Knowing*, he affirms, is conviction from objective grounds—believing, from subjective grounds. Knowing is the first degree of conviction, faith the second; while opinion is conviction of a still feebler kind.¹

Lastly, to probe this faith-principle to its foundation, he furnishes a new theory of the Feelings,

¹ See Michelet, vol. i. p. 406.

(published 1823,) in which he attempts to show that feeling is the dim and undefined ground from which thought springs forth, and that it is by means of thought or reflection that the knowledge, which feeling conveys, is rendered clear and valid. The motto which he prefixes to this work well-nigh explains its whole theory.

Fühlen willst du? Wohlan! Es regt sich innerst im Herzen
Jedes schöne Gefühl, stammend von oben herab,
Doch vergiss nicht, dass auch von dorthier stammt der Gedanke,
Funke der Gottheit, Gefühl! Funke der Gottheit, Vernunft!¹

This last attempt of Krug opens to us the way for the philosophy of Fries (born 1773, since 1805 professor of philosophy at Heidelberg and Jena, died about 1844), in which the element of feeling again attains a predominance, more nearly equal to what it held in the writings of Jacobi. The chief work of this author is entitled "A New Critique of Pure Reason"

¹ The following graphic sketch of Krug's philosophical life, in a religious point of view, is given by M. Amand Saintes, in his "Histoire Critique du Rationalisme," p. 207.

"Fertile and earnest as a writer, Krug made use of all possible methods to extend the empire of Kant's philosophical ideas at the expense of the ancient faith. Speeches, articles, programmes, dissertations, dictionaries, manuals, all forms, and one might say all fashions, were employed to arrive at his purpose; for he did not even disdain satire when he judged it necessary to shut the mouth of his adversaries. He appeared, after a long life spent in struggles, to have earned some enjoyment of the fruit of his labours; but we are assured that his wounded self-love contemplates with bitter feeling a generation which no longer applauds with the same warmth his philosophical dissertations, * * * and that he has not been insensible to the withering of his laurels."

(published first in 1807,) the object of which was, to place the categories of Kant upon a fresh basis, and to show how they all spring forth from inward sense, or feeling. The position, accordingly, which Fries holds in the history of philosophical doctrines, is between Kant and Jacobi, with a predominant leaning to the latter. He admits, with Kant, that all our notions and conceptions, all that we properly term knowledge (*Wissen*), arises from our inward faculties, and, consequently, is purely subjective: on the other hand, he maintains, with Jacobi, that there is an inward faith-principle, to which all our thoughts and notions are secondary. The one he regards as fallible, and, consequently, unworthy our implicit confidence; the other he holds up as that sure and infallible organ of absolute truth, by which the real nature of things is made known to us.

The philosophy of Fries may be regarded fundamentally as a mixture of scepticism and idealism. His theory of certitude is purely subjective—his theory of truth simply the agreement of our ideas within themselves. So far he must be considered as assuming a sceptical position with regard to all objective reality. To avoid this result, however, he brings in, in addition to *Wissen*, other two principles of knowledge, termed *Glauben* and *Ahnung*. Knowledge simply comprehends the *phenomena* which we gain by means of sensation and understanding. Faith gives us an insight into the more intimate nature of things—raising us to the intuition of the true, the beautiful, the good, still

only as subjective principles. That which he terms *Ahnung*, alone gives us any conception of these things as sublime objective realities.

The chief feature, then, in Fries' system (which he terms philosophical anthropology) is the attempt to draw thought and feeling into closer connexion; to show that, instead of being entirely different phenomena, the one naturally arises from the other; that they both conspire to aid us in reading our own inward nature aright; and, *through that*, of understanding the nature of the world without. The opinions of Fries have perhaps gained the greatest fame through their application to theology.¹ As we forbear, however, as much as possible, to venture upon this ground, we pass on to the last of the names we have placed together under this subdivision, that, namely, of Calker.

Frederick von Calker (formerly private teacher at Berlin, since 1818 professor at Bonn) has brought the two elements of thought and feeling into complete union, so that the whole difference between them in his system altogether disappears, and the faith-philosophy becomes entirely sunk in the ordinary procedure of metaphysics. Like those whom we have before noticed, he appeals to consciousness, as being to us the foundation of all truth. In the consciousness we find three features of spiritual existence, namely, knowledge, action, and love; and, by the play of these three laws of our being,

¹ The celebrated theologian, De Wette, has made much use of the philosophy of Fries, in the construction of his theological principles.

we are placed in close fellowship with the very nature and essence of things themselves, which fall under the three corresponding ideas of the true, the good, and the beautiful. The object of Calker is to exhibit the original laws (*Urgesetze*) by which, these three ideas develop themselves, in all their fruitful results, to the human mind ; in doing which, faith is not viewed either as the beginning or ending of philosophy, but is made absolutely identical with scientific knowledge.¹

In summing up, then, this movement of the philosophical mysticism of Germany, we must consider, that it all results from the varied application of the two facts of logical thinking and inward faith, as they were furnished, the one by Kant, the other by Jacobi. In Krug, thought or reflection is the more prominent of the two, and plays decidedly the greater part in the creation of all human knowledge ; in Bouterwek, the two elements as nearly as possible balance each other, the scale trembling alternately on either side ; in Fries, the faith-principle becomes greatly predominant ; whilst, lastly, in Calker, the distinction vanishes, and both facts are blended in one. Such are the attempts which have been made to complete the Kantian philosophy, by the introduction of mys-

¹ Calker's chief work is entitled "*Urgesetzlehre des Wahren, Guten, und Schönen, als Darstellung der Sogenannten Metaphysik.*" The principle of Calker, as above stated—that, namely, which merges all the different processes of our intellectual life, whether knowledge, faith, or love, into the science of consciousness—is virtually a return to the subjective idealism of Fichte. The reader will also be reminded here of some of the main features of M. de Lamennais' latest philosophy.

ticism; and if the results have not been entirely successful, yet they have called forth much truth, and may be looked upon as making one appreciable step in the march of philosophy.¹

2. The writers who have grafted the faith-principle upon the philosophy of Fichte, are Schlegel, Schleiermacher, and Novalis. Charles William Frederick Schlegel was born at Hanover in 1772. In 1796 he commenced private lecturing at Dresden. After a time he went to Berlin, and lectured there with great approbation and success. From thence he removed to Paris, where he studied chiefly the oriental languages. On his return to Germany, he joined the Romish Church, and settled at Vienna as court secretary. After experiencing some other changes, external and mental, he died on a temporary visit to Dresden, January 11, 1829.

To estimate the literary life of Schlegel aright, we must regard it in its progressive development. His earlier years, it is well known, were given to classical literature and criticism; and ever after, indeed, he retained the faculty of presenting ideas in a popular and descriptive form, to a much higher degree than that of constructing a connected and logical system. Hence, while the writings of Schlegel are far better known out of Germany than most other philosophical works of the present century,

¹ In this representation of the Jacobi-Kantists, I have chiefly followed Michelet. The view he takes of them is, however, fully confirmed by all the principal historians of the modern philosophy of Germany.

they present much greater difficulty when we attempt to condense them briefly into an organic whole.

He tried his pen, first of all, in the department of philosophy, by writing sketches and reviews for some of the higher periodicals of the day. These were afterwards collected, in conjunction with those of his brother Augustus William, and published under the title of "*Characteristiken und Kritiken*." The earliest work in which Schlegel published his philosophical views, independently, to the world, was a romance entitled "*Lucinde*." Here he sought to employ the subjective philosophy of Fichte, in order to explain the nature and the mysteries of human life. In the years 1804-5-6, he delivered courses of lectures, in which he aimed at explaining logically the views he had presented before only in their poetical form, but in which it is easy to detect a gradual swerving from his original subjective standpoint, towards the mysticism of his later life.¹

A period of twenty years now intervenes before our author again appears before the public in the garb of a philosopher; but in the mean time, his whole intellectual life had undergone almost an entire alteration. He had gone from the literary activity of Saxony to the mental stagnation of Vienna, from the religious freedom of Protestantism, to the absolute submission of the Catholic. In a word, the subjective principles of his former works had produced their recoil, and driven him into an utterly objective

¹ These lectures were published posthumously in his remains by Windishmann. (1836.)

mysticism. In the year 1827, he began again to lecture on philosophy, at Vienna, and to develop his altered views in a popular and discursive form. These lectures comprehend "The Philosophy of Life," "The Philosophy of History," and "The Philosophy of Language." It was whilst engaged indeed in completing his last course, then delivering at Dresden, that his career was arrested by the hand of death. We must proceed accordingly to give an exposition of Schlegel's philosophy, as it appears before us during the different eras we have just described.

In order to comprehend the philosophy contained in the "*Lucinde*,"¹ it is necessary to cast a glance upon the "*Wissenschaftslehre*" of Fichte. Fichte made the *me*, the absolute generating principle of all things. There are, however, two sides to this position, the theoretical and the practical. In his theoretical philosophy, Fichte represented *the me* as fettered and determined by certain inexplicable laws, which took the place of the not-me—the objective world; and to which the endless activity of the *me* was subjected. On the other hand, these laws, these objective bounds, were explained by the practical philosophy, as themselves the product of the absolute activity of the *me*, created in order to bring that activity to some distinct end, and aid it in the accomplishment of its own destiny. Hence two views

¹ *Lucinde*, whom he pictures in this romance, was his future wife, a daughter of Mendelssohn, the philosopher, and the German translator of Mad. de Staël's "*Corinne*."

of human life could arise. Either on the theoretical principle the *me* yields itself to the power of what appear then to be objective laws and realities, or, assuming its *practical* independence, it holds itself free from such trammels, and lives simply and solely for itself. This latter, according to Schlegel, is the spirit of *the romantic* in human life in its loftier meaning, and forms the view of life itself which is pictured in "Lucinde."

To get a deeper insight into this remarkable aspect in which human life was portrayed by our author, it must be further observed, that the theoretical and practical stand-points are in themselves paradoxical. The one supposes that the mind is controlled, the other that it is free; the one subjects it to objective laws, the other elevates it above them, so that they appear to be made only by and for itself. How, then, is this contradiction to be solved? By bringing in, says Schlegel, the idea of *Irony*. The *me* is absolutely free; but it loves paradox, and chooses of itself to submit to the objective. At the same time, it knows that this submission is in itself *unreal*, that it is only true *ironically*; and that, while it plays off the paradox of submission, it may still feel itself independent. Such is the philosophy of the higher romantic in human life. There the mind, though involved in all the habits and regulations of *outward* life, yet lives for itself, clothes the objective in the garb of its own individuality, throws the light of the inward world over the most common scenes and events of

the outward ; and lives thus itself, a paradox and a perpetual irony upon human existence.

This state of mind expresses itself by a tender and hallowed feeling, a longing which, independently of its object, is itself bliss. This longing cannot be realised in *action*. What avails action, when the whole circumference of being, and even of possibility, is already included in the very nature of the me? To act, is to suppose that something more can be produced, some higher and happier condition, than that already attained. As all being and all possibility is already in *the me*, the only high and blissful life is to give ourselves up to divine idleness ; to allow our being spontaneously to *vegetate* ; and the nearer the life of the man approaches to that of the *plant*, the more pure and perfect it is. Here, at length, in this spontaneous vegetation of our being, in this hallowed idleness, we find eternal sunshine and youth ; instead of grasping eagerly after some distant object, some unrealised bliss, we find in our very longing itself, the goal and the prize at which it aims. *Only in the seeking itself, does the spirit discover the mystery after which it seeks.* Here, then, we see the subjective principle absolutely complete. The me, at length, becomes the cause, impulse, boundary, and goal of its own action. Such is the ironical stand-point in Schlegel's philosophy ; such the nature of the truly romantic in human life.¹

¹ On the scientific principle of "Lucinde," see Schaller's "Vorlesungen über Schleiermacher," Lec. i. (Halle, 1844.)

We must now pass to our author's lectures, as delivered in the years 1804-1806. Here we find him attempting to bring his principles, hitherto presented in a very discursive form, into some degree of philosophical order ; and at the same time struggling against the extreme results to which they seemed infallibly to lead. The first volume contains an introduction, a logic, and a rapid survey of the history of philosophy. The second volume includes his lectures on psychology, on nature, on man, on the Deity, and, to some extent, on morals.

In the introduction he explains the *idea* of philosophy, as being that of a fundamental science, which gives life and soul to all the rest, and affords the only absolute basis on which they can rest.¹ To determine the method of philosophy, is the province of logic. Logic, in its lower acceptation, is the "science of the rules of thinking," and, accordingly, has to do simply with the forms of thought. In this respect, of course, it can have nothing to do with objective truth ; and to use the syllogistic organum for this purpose, is to involve ourselves in a mere empty dogmatism. There is, however, a higher logic, which has to do with the *real objects* of philosophy ; which points us at once to their inward essence, and shows us their progressive development. The former is termed the syllogistic, the latter the genetic method.

The genetic or speculative method gives us the real and essential development of the idea we form

¹ "Vorlesungen über Schleiermacher," vol. i. p. 13, &c.

of existence itself; it affords us a philosophical *construction* of the universe. This method has three movements, which must concur in the evolution of an idea: the first is abstraction, by which we grasp the pure essential idea itself; the second is *construction*, by which we exhibit its varied properties in their order and connexion; and the third is *reflection*, in which we recombine the parts into a whole. In this part of Schlegel's logic, we are strongly reminded of the dialectic method of Hegel; and it has even been reproached to the latter by some of his opponents, that he has borrowed the essential ideas of his own world-renowned system from these early deliverances of Schlegel. Which ever may have been first in the field, certain it is, that the lectures before us contain a logical constructive method, which proposes to show the rhythm of all being, and that this method contains the triple movement, consisting of the union of two opposites in a higher indifference.¹ This method is, indeed, to a great extent, *developed* by the deduction of the chief categories of existence, and the construction of the full conception of God.

As another preparation for his metaphysical system, Schlegel next gives a sketch of the history of philosophy, following the great schools of idealism, empiricism, scepticism, and mysticism, through their various changes, and estimating their various merits. The result is, that each of these systems is seen to contain some element of truth; but that,

¹ "Vorlesungen über Schleiermacher," vol. i. p. 159, *et seq.*

after all has been done, the only source from which a clear and steady light can be thrown on our researches, the only spirit which can unite all the results of our science into a harmonious whole, the only guide which can lead us through the labyrinth of human opinions into the broad daylight of truth, is that *faith*, which, dimly seen in the Platonic, has been fully developed in the Christian philosophy. Here, then, we see the mysticism of Schlegel breaking through the clouds of his original subjective idealism. In fact, he had carried his subjective principle to such a pitch, that at length he took refuge in an objective and historical revelation, against the bottomless abyss of his own scientific conclusions.¹

This leads us to Schlegel's later philosophical system. Hitherto he had been only groping out of his subjective trammels; now, however, having reached the religious point of view—the only one, as he thinks, from which truth can be seen with distinct and steady eye—he begins to build up his edifice. Seen from the religious point of view, the real object of philosophy is to restore to mankind that Divine image which it has lost. Men, for the most part, are buried in objective pursuits, and gratifications of sense; they do not see the purport of their existence; they do not comprehend the true end of human life; they do not gaze steadfastly at their high destiny. To bring these things home

¹ See Michelet, vol. ii. p. 4; also Schaller's "Vorlesungen," p. 29-31.

to our inner consciousness, to restore truth to the mind, and inspire it to labour for high purposes—this is the noble aim of all true philosophy. Schlegel, then, divides his system into three parts:—1. Philosophy of Life; 2. Philosophy of History; 3. Philosophy of Thought, both subjectively and objectively considered. In the first, he shows the primary state of the human consciousness in its rise above the grossness of common life, and its first aspirations after truth. In the second, he traces the development of this higher life through the various ages of history; in the last, he intended to picture the state of man in his final restoration to the Divine likeness.

1. The philosophy of life comprehends, first, psychology, and then theology both in itself and in its applications. In his psychology, Schlegel regards our whole compound humanity as consisting of mind, soul, and body. The mind possesses the two faculties of will and understanding; the soul possesses other two, termed reason and imagination. Imagination invents; reason regulates; understanding perceives; and will impels to moral action.¹

Man, at his creation, not only had these faculties in their highest perfection, but they all worked harmoniously together, so as to bring out the most glorious moral and intellectual results. But since the entrance of sin into the world, they have been

¹ Schlegel enumerates also four subordinate faculties; the senses, the passions, memory, and conscience. These are the connecting links between the four principal.

thrown into fearful disorder ; so that, by the operation of one faculty clashing with another, the purport of the whole has been frustrated and destroyed. The object alike of religion and philosophy, is to restore the harmony which has been thus broken.¹

With regard to the ground-principles of natural theology, Schlegel rests the knowledge of God upon a fourfold revelation which is made to us in scripture, in nature, in conscience, and in history. In treating of the first of these proofs, that of scripture and tradition generally, Schlegel employs a course of reasoning precisely similar to that of the French theological school. With regard to the light of conscience, he reminds us strongly of Kant and Jacobi.

The principal object he has in view, however, in entering the region of theology, is to show its vast importance in the philosophical exposition of the other branches of human knowledge. Once let us light up the torch of a pure theology, and we see everything around us as parts of a great plan. From this point of view, for example, we gain a deeper insight into the philosophy of *nature*, which is still going on to its perfection, and awaiting the new heavens and the new earth. From this again springs the true philosophy of government. God is the ruler of mankind, the sole origin of all power ; and the three relationships in which the power of God is represented on earth, are those of the father, the priest, and the sovereign. The authority which

¹ "Phil. des Lebens," p. 140, *et seq.*

each of these possesses, according to Schlegel, is Divine. In brief, the author here discusses every philosophical question from a purely religious standpoint. Man, nature, history, human life, everything is viewed in its relation with God ; and from Divine revelation alone are we to find the key to their interpretation.

2. If the object of the philosophy of life is to describe the first awakening of conscience to a higher existence, the philosophy of *History* shows the process by which this great end has hitherto been unfolding itself in the world. The loss of the Divine image consisted in the separation of the elements of the human consciousness ; its restoration will consist in the complete reunion of them. In the first period of the world, the Chinese represented the pure reason ; the Indians, the imagination ; the Egyptians, the understanding ; and the Jews, the will—each in its false and fatal isolation. The second period of the world's history began with the Persians, and included the Greek and Roman world. In this age, we see the uniting process in its commencement—we see humanity stepping forth into a more commanding position, and becoming more blended in political relations, and in mental communion, through the world. The third age is the Christian. Here we find the true uniting principle, which, though striven against by self-love, by natural vanity, and by the false spirit of independence, shall at length unite all mankind into one vast brotherhood ; shall bring back all the

scattered elements of man's consciousness into one focus, and make humanity itself Divine.¹ In all this, Schlegel's catholicism burns forth most conspicuously. To him everything that favours *freedom*, political or mental, is antichrist; and peace is to be found only in submission to authority, both in church and state.

3. Having taken an historical review of man's spiritual life up to the present day, Schlegel proceeds to describe the final completion and reunion of man's consciousness in the world, which he proposed to explain at length in the philosophies of *language*, of *religion*, and of *nature*.² In all these, the mystical element is most prominently shown forth. *Language*, he considers, is the outward transcript of those eternal ideas and feelings, which have flowed from the mind of God into that of man. *Religion* expresses the innermost point of the human consciousness—that in which reflection and feeling unite, and in which God is realised as the very corner-stone of our inward life. Lastly, *nature* is to be viewed by the philosopher as the perpetual manifestation of the Divine love in a material form. In these lectures, delivered at Dresden, we see a somewhat higher philosophical element than in those which he composed for the lecture-room of

¹ "Phil. der Geschichte," lec. 5, 7, and 18.

² These topics were treated of in a course of lectures which he commenced at Dresden. Nine of them were delivered, and it was whilst preparing the others, that he was suddenly called from his labours. The last words he wrote on his MS. were these:—"Das ganz vollendete und vollkommene Verstehen selbst aber—"

Vienna. In the "Philosophie des Lebens," indeed, he departed almost entirely from the very idea of *science*, and took his stand upon a purely objective revelation, coming to us through tradition and the Bible. In the Dresden lectures, the spirit of mysticism is equally apparent; but it appears in a more subjective form, and approaches nearer to the faith-philosophy of Jacobi. The result to which they virtually arrive, may be briefly stated as follows:—That true knowledge consists, not in viewing things as they externally appear, but as they are essentially in themselves; and that the only way by which we can attain to such a perception of them is, by seeing how they have all flowed forth from God, and how they eternally subsist in Him. The method by which this result is prosecuted, is a mixture of religious faith, historical research, and speculative reasoning; a method which seems to combine, in strange association, the reflection of Fichte and the faith-philosophy of Jacobi, with the submissive religious belief of the catholic.¹

Pass we now from Schlegel to his friend Frederick Daniel Ernest Schleiermacher. This extraordinary thinker and writer was born at Breslau, A. D. 1768, of parents who belonged to the society of Moravian Brethren. His earliest years were spent in the midst of the religious life, for which that brotherhood was remarkable; and never did he lose the impressions which were made upon him at that period. He studied theology at the Uni-

¹ Michelet, vol. ii. pp. 5—46.

versity of Halle; and, in 1794, was ordained to a pastorate, first in Landsberg, and then at Berlin. In the year 1802, he became professor of theology and university preacher at Halle; and, in 1806, removed again to Berlin, where he resided, sustaining the various offices of preacher, professor, and royal minister of instruction, until his death, which took place on the 12th of Feb. 1834.

Schleiermacher was, *par excellence*, a theologian. Religion had been the friend and companion of his childhood; and he never deserted his first love. The instruction of religion formed the great purpose of his life; the reformation and spread of religion was the object of his most earnest endeavours; and his last words, after receiving the holy communion, were, "In *this* faith I die." Had we to portray the influence which Schleiermacher exerted upon the theology of his age, we should fill many pages, ere we could do justice to his long and laborious life. We should have, for example, to describe the startling effect of his discourses on religion, ("Reden über die Religion,") where he attacked infidelity in its last resource, namely, that of indifference; to recall the solemn accents with which his "Monologues" fell upon the ear of his countrymen; to picture the mighty power of his eloquence, as felt by those who listened to his Sabbath-day labours, or perused them after they were immortalised by his pen: most of all, should we have to trace the entrance of his great production on the "Doctrine of Faith," (Glaubenslehre,) into

the abodes of the learned, and the halls of theology and science, to see it wrestling there with the cold-hearted rationalism of the age, or recalling the common soul of humanity back to its better nature and its final rest. These things, however, we must waive, and only take a brief view of Schleiermacher, as a *speculative philosopher*.

One of his earliest efforts in philosophy was his undertaking, in conjunction with Schlegel, to execute a complete translation of Plato.¹ The influence that flowed from his love for that sublime thinker, was visible, more or less, through his whole life; so that, while the right understanding of Platonism owes much to his efforts in its elucidation, he undoubtedly owed much that was lofty and spiritual in his metaphysical views to it. To deduce a complete and connected system of philosophy from the miscellaneous writings of Schleiermacher would be impossible; in fact, it was a part of his very doctrine, that no philosophical system should be propounded for universal reception, and that no school should be formed. Whilst, therefore, he lectured much upon philosophy, and took many original views upon most questions which it brings before us, he has left no followers behind him, to associate his name with any peculiar class of metaphysical opinions. The writings of Schleiermacher may be divided into three classes. 1. Those which

¹ At this time, too, Schleiermacher entered enthusiastically into the views expressed by Schlegel, in his "Lucinde." The result was the publication of a little work, entitled "Vertraute Briefe über die Lucinde."

are presented in the oratorical, or, at least, the more poetical form. To these belong the "Reden über die Religion," the "Monologen," and the "Weihnachtsfeier." 2. Those which bear the stamp of a purely philosophical character; amongst which we reckon chiefly the lectures on "Dialektik," published as part of his remains (1839), and his "Sketch of a System of Morals." 3. Those which bear more immediately upon theology. The principal of these (excepting of course his discourses, and tracts of merely local interest) are the work entitled "Christlicher Glaube," and his "Kurze Darstellung des Theologischen Studiums." We must attempt, therefore, to take a rapid glance at these writings, so far, at least, as they carry with them a philosophical interest.

With respect to the "Reden," a cursory view shows us that the chief philosophical interest of the whole is concentrated in the *second*. It is here that the author proposes to search into the *essence* of religion; to strip it of all collateral phenomena; and to hold up the *man himself*, in his real relation to the Divine. With great and impressive eloquence, he negatives the idea, that religion can be a mere *science*; and equally so the supposition, that it can be a form of *action*. Religion must be something which has a sphere of its own, in connexion with the human mind, and into the nature of this sphere we must endeavour to penetrate. According to Schleiermacher, then, religion is a deep emotion of the mind, arising from the absorp-

tion of the man—the individual man—in the infinite. “The universe,” he remarks, “is in one uninterrupted activity, and manifests itself to us every moment. Every form which it brings forth; every being to whom, according to the fulness of life, it gives a separate existence; every event which it shakes out of its rich and ever-fruitful bosom, is a working of the same upon us; and to grasp every single thing, not for itself, but as a part of the whole; to view everything limited, not in its opposition to anything else, but as a manifestation of the infinite in our life; and to give ourselves up to the emotion thus occasioned,—this is religion.”¹ Again, he says,—“The one and all in religion, is to perceive everything which moves us in feeling, in its highest unity, as one and the same; and everything particular and singular as only existing through *this*; consequently, to regard our life and being as a life and being in God.”² Throughout the whole oration, the author labours to make it clear and convincing, that religion is the feeling of the infinite—the particular seen to be a part of the universal; in brief, that it is to view God in all things, and all things in God.

So far Schleiermacher would seem to be throwing himself into a kind of theological objective idealism; in fact, as an evidence of this, he passes a splendid panegyric upon Spinoza as a man “full of religion, and full of the Holy Ghost.”³ In the Monologues, however, we see the influence of Fichte

¹ Reden, p. 58, (Berlin, 1843).

² Ibid. p. 59.

³ Ibid. p. 43.

reappearing; here in due time we have the subjective phase of the religious life fully expounded, and placed by the side of those former and more objective speculations. As in the Orations, so in the Monologues, the second topic of discussion is that which excites the deepest interest—it is that, namely, in which Schleiermacher develops his peculiar doctrine of individuality (*Princip der Eigenthümlichkeit*). Fichte, as we have seen, made the *me absolute*; the very essence of *man* to him consisted in our self-consciousness; no higher absolute principle was admitted as at all conceivable. Schleiermacher, on the contrary, started with a conception of the absolute as complete as that of Spinoza; but now comes back to the affirmation of the *me*, as itself comprehending and involving the absolute. This blending of the objective and subjective stand-point might at first seem altogether contradictory, but this is far from being the case. We may abstract from *self* all mere finite individuality; we may attain the notion of *pure personality* as existing in every man: and then what results? Clearly this, that every man is a peculiar manifestation of the absolute, a representation in himself of the whole universe. The human consciousness is a microcosm—each one a distinct microcosm. In a word, the Deity unfolds and manifests Himself through the individualities of the different minds which He has created. Here, therefore, the objective philosophy of the Orations, and the subjective philosophy of the Monologues unite. In the former we see man elevated by religion to oneness with the absolute; in the latter, we see him

manifesting the absolute through the very medium of his own peculiar individuality.

But the question now comes, how are we to realise our oneness with the absolute; how can we rise to this high and holy religious consciousness? This is the point illustrated in the Weihnachtsfeier; in which *Christ* is represented as the perfect union of the human consciousness with the Divine; and man, exhorted by a living union with him, to realise his own union with God. "As Schleiermacher," observes Michelet, "could not but perceive that the peculiar (*das Eigenthümliche*), as such, must be a very inadequate expression of the universal, while still the peculiar was the very principle of his philosophy, he holds up a privileged personality, that of Christ, as the highest expression of the absolute. This is the only unity, in which the many can know themselves as one. Accordingly he lays down, in the life of the individual, two sources of joy which should be celebrated. Our birthday is the type of a *definite* and *limited* feeling. The Christmas festival is the *universal* feeling, in which we celebrate human nature, as it is seen flowing from the Divine principle. The earth-spirit, namely, humanity itself, is perfect and without growth, but the individual man is subjected both to imperfection and to progress, until he becomes one with humanity at large. Only when the individual regards humanity as a living assembly of individuals, only when he bears in himself its spirit and its consciousness, when he loses himself in its separate existence, and

anon finds himself again,—only then has he in himself the higher life, and the peace of God. This communion, the self-consciousness of mankind in the individual, is the Church. We seek a point, then, from which such communion has sprung, and because in Christ this self-consciousness of the earth-spirit first awoke, therefore he is the Word of God become flesh. In the God-man, therefore, all are one, for every one must manifest this identity. In the birth of Christ every one sees his own higher birth, and therefore universal joy is the character of the Christmas festival.”¹

Here, then, we see the *first* series of Schleiermacher’s speculations completed. In the Orations we have religion contemplated as a *feeling*, the feeling of the infinite; in the Monologues we have it regarded as moral *energy*; and in the Christmas festival, we have it brought into the form of a distinct *idea*, the union of the finite and infinite personality through oneness with Christ.

We must now pass to the consideration of Schleiermacher’s philosophy, as it appears in its more direct and formal character. Every kind of knowledge which is not based upon philosophy, he regards as either traditionary, or in some way incomplete. Real knowledge can only arise from a perception of the unity and completeness of all science, as springing from fixed fundamental principles. The basis of all philosophy, therefore, and consequently of all truth, must be found in the essential identity of the

¹ “Entwickelungs-geschichte,” p. 97.

knowing and the known, of thought and existence. This unity, it is evident, cannot be realised as an *idea* or conception; for then it would already be within the region of *the ideal*, neither can it be realised, as Fichte would have it, in the *will*. The blending of thought and volition, however, produces a phenomenon termed *feeling*, and it is *here* that all opposition between subject and object vanishes, here we obtain a direct intuition of the absolute. (Jacobi).

All philosophy, then, *supposes* the absolute in itself, and likewise assumes the opposition of subject and object, of the intellectual and the natural, as fundamental determinations of it. This gives rise to two main and all-embracing sciences; the science of *nature* and the science of *reason*. To look still further into the details of philosophy, we must take into consideration, that there are two modes in which all science may be viewed; namely, as empirical or observing on the one hand, as speculative or intuitional on the other. All *real* knowledge is both empirical and speculative; the difference between its various departments, consisting only in the relative preponderance of the one form of knowing over the other. Accordingly, taking the sciences of nature and reason as fundamental, we may regard each of them in two different lights; that is, as having a preponderance on the one hand of the empirical, on the other hand of the speculative. *Nature*, viewed with a maximum of the empirical, is Natural History (Naturkunde); with a

maximum of the speculative, it is Physics (Naturwissenschaft). On the other side, reason, viewed with a preponderance of the empirical, gives the Philosophy of History (Geschichtskunde); with a preponderance of the speculative it gives *Ethics*. The science of nature is only real and philosophical in as far as it is penetrated with *reason*; that of reason, only so far as it is viewed in connexion with *nature*. The empirical and the speculative must mutually penetrate each other, in order to produce real and valid knowledge. If the empirical be viewed alone, then we have merely the bare observation of phenomena, but no *science*; if the speculative be viewed alone, then we have formal logic or dialektik, which has no element of *realism* to support it.¹

In his dialektik, Schleiermacher develops the *forms* of our knowledge with great logical skill, showing (something on the plan of Fichte) how all can be deduced from the fundamental opposition of subject and object, as that in which they are all virtually included. The union of these leads to a higher sphere of mental activity, that of the religious feeling—the intuition of the absolute. By far the most important part of our author's philosophy, however, is contained in the ethics, which have gained in his hands a depth and a significancy never before attained to. Ethics, according to Schleiermacher, is the science which treats of the unity of *nature*

¹ "Entwurf eines Systems der Sittenlehre." See the "Introductory Explanations."

and *reason*. Now ethical philosophy, as we showed above, is a branch of science in which the *speculative* predominates, and consequently, like all speculative science, must take its stand upon the universal, and deduce from thence the particular. Ethics accordingly, scientifically considered, is the expression of a *perpetual operating* of reason upon nature. Should it lead us to deduce their absolute unity, so that nature becomes all reason, or reason all nature, the science would be complete, and no further philosophy on the subject required; the continued attempt, however, to unfold their connexion and unity, is precisely the process in which ethical science, as we now grasp it, consists.

Reason, in its operation upon nature, assumes two great characteristics. First of all, it shows itself as the principle of *form*, or organisation. But, secondly, inasmuch as every form in nature is significant of some *idea*, reason shows itself, also, in connexion with nature as a *symbolising* power or activity. These characteristics, which are seen in the material world, impress themselves, also, upon all the features of human society. Whenever nature and reason blend in harmony, there is what we term *good*. According as reason and nature stand affected to each other, different kinds of good come to view. Sometimes the organising power is predominant, and sometimes the symbolising—sometimes the idea of unity is in the foreground, and sometimes that of individuality. On these principles, Schleiermacher explains the moral constitution

of the family, the state, the principle of association, the priesthood of science, and the ethical nature of the Church.

After these hints as to the position which the ethics hold in our author's philosophy, we must be content to refer our readers to the works themselves for a fuller elucidation.¹

Schleiermacher's most voluminous writings are those which relate to theology. His "Dogmatik" is built upon the reality of religion as developing itself in feeling. Starting from this point, he has produced a system of theology which has had more influence upon the theological thinking in the present age, than, perhaps, any other production of our whole European literature. The subjective idealism of Fichte, and the faith-philosophy of Jacobi, are here seen to pour out all their treasures as humble contributions to the full expansion of the Christian doctrine. We would earnestly recommend the reader who wishes to understand somewhat of the best, the most spiritual, the most religious of the German theological literature, to peruse these noble writings of Schleiermacher; where, amidst much that he may perchance reject, he will find no few materials of instruction and delight.²

¹ The chief ethical works of Schleiermacher are, "Grundlinien einer Kritik der bisherigen Sittenlehre, (1803;) "Ueber die Wissenschaftliche Behandlung des Tugendbegriffs, (1819;) Ditto "Des Pflichtbegriffs," (1824;) "Ueber den Begriff des höchsten Gutes," (1827 and 1830;) and the "Entwurf der Sittenlehre," as before mentioned.

² As a good introduction to Schleiermacher, see Schaller's "Vorlesungen."

There is yet another name which we must not altogether omit, that, namely, of Novalis. Friedrich Baron von Hardenberg (such was his proper appellation) was born, like Schleiermacher, of Moravian parents, in the duchy of Mansfeld, A.D. 1772. In 1790 he entered the university of Jena, and completed his studies in Leipsig and Wittenberg. In 1795 he settled at Weissenfels in Thuringia, where, about the same year, he married. Death, however, soon removed his bride from his then happy home, whom, after lingering three melancholy years, he followed into that eternity, with thoughts of which his writings were so deeply imbued. Novalis completes the cycle of mysticism, which we have seen springing from the mixed influence of Fichte and Jacobi. Schlegel, in whom it commenced, took refuge, as we saw, from the abyss of scepticism, to which his extreme subjective principles led, in an objective revelation, as the organ of eternal verities otherwise unknown. Schleiermacher, while making each human consciousness the supreme arbiter and test of truth, yet would assimilate them all to the perfect mind of Christ, the Divine Man, the type of infinite purity and love. Novalis, proceeding one step further, regards it as the true purport of philosophy to destroy the individual, the finite, the imperfect, the subjective self; and to enable us to become one with the infinite and all-perfect mind. To him the foundation of all philosophy is faith, that is, an inward light, which reveals to us the infinite and the real; a direct perception of the Divinity; an irresistible

conviction of the presence of the great spirit of the universe in all we see, hear, and feel around us. Thinking is to him but the reflection or *the dream of* faith, one which pictures to us truth only in dim, unreal, and fantastic forms. It is only when we cause our own individuality to sink and die within us, when the peculiar thoughts and feelings of the finite self are crushed under the power of the higher feelings, and we become absorbed in the Divine, that we rise to the full light of truth, and gaze upon things as they are. In Novalis, accordingly, we no longer see the idealist taking his stand upon the principles of a purely subjective philosophy; but we see him, having left the road, and introduced the additional element of a higher faith, completely overcoming the subjective point of view, sinking the individual self in the great spirit of the universe, and evincing a sublime mysticism, that strives to unite man with God.

Novalis only published during his lifetime a few poetical rhapsodies (Hymns on the Night), and other light productions; the chief of his philosophical notions are derived from his posthumous fragments, in which he touches upon many points in morals, physics, and philosophy; and develops somewhat at large the ideas to which we have just adverted.¹ The merits of Novalis, as an æsthetic

¹ "Novalis Schriften;" "Herausgegeben von Tieck und Schlegel." (1814 and 1837.) These consist of two small vols. 12mo, containing the poems and other fragments. The first vol. consists of a little romance, entitled "Heinrich von Ofterdingen." The second compre-

writer, have been discussed in several of our English reviews. The reader can judge of his general style of composition by a reference to these articles : our object has been simply to show his proper position in the development of the subjective mysticism of Germany, as it arose during the earlier years of the present century.

Let us sum up our remarks in a few words. The tendency of Kant's philosophy flowed decidedly towards the point of view we have indicated by the term *subjective idealism* ; that, namely, which makes all human knowledge spring from and concentrate in self. This subjective principle was completed in Fichte. In Schlegel we see the subjective philosophy just about to open into the region of scepticism, we might even say of nihilism, and the fatal consequences only retrieved by the interposition of faith. This, accordingly, is to be viewed as the critical turning-point between the subjective and objective tendency in the German philosophy. In Schleiermacher we see the subjective principle not repudiated as by Schlegel, but beginning to assume a more objective character, inasmuch as the human individuality, according to him, is to be moulded into the likeness of Christ, until all men, in their religious consciousness, reflect his Divine image. In Novalis, at length, the subjective self is to be

hends the "Hymnen an die Nacht," the "Lehrlinge zu Saïs," and some philosophical fragments. Of these, the first is on "Philosophy and Physics," in which the idea of nature is particularly developed. The second is on "Æsthetics and Literature."

crushed and destroyed, and we are to become one with God, the soul of the world.¹

Here subjective mysticism terminates, and we find a transition from the predominant influence of Fichte to that of Schelling. Schelling saw the abyss of nihilism, in which subjective idealism, when consecutively developed, must end; and began by asserting the claims of some objective reality, upon our firm belief. We have already shown in what manner he developed his whole system of objective idealism, and how nearly he had come in his later views upon the verge of philosophical mysticism. The majority of his followers, indeed, have become decided mystics; and we must now, accordingly, advert to the views which have arisen from the conjunction of the opinions of Schelling with those of Jacobi. Schelling's most popular and striking productions, are unquestionably those in which he develops his principles of "*Natur-Philosophie*." The school of Schelling, accordingly, has ever been characterised by its tendency to institute speculations of this kind; which, when united with the faith-philosophy, have given rise to theosophic systems, some of a more sober, and others of a more extravagant character. This leads us, then, to consider

3. Those writers who have combined objective idealism with the philosophy of feeling. One of the most celebrated, and, at the same time, most

¹ See Michelet "*Geschichte*," vol. ii. p. 4, and 114. See also his "*Entwickelungs-geschichte*," lec. 5.

valuable of these authors, is Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert, now professor at Munich. Incited by his objective tendency, and by his evident admiration of Schelling, Schubert directed his attention, for the most part, to the philosophy of nature, and proposed mystical interpretations of many natural phenomena. In fact, his system, as a whole, starts from nature, and proceeds upwards to spirit ; and, accordingly, most of his first writings refer entirely to the world of outward phenomena. The following titles of some of these works will give an idea of the primary branches of Schubert's philosophy :—" Views from the Night Region of Natural Science" (1808), "The Original World and the Fixed Stars" (1822), "Universal History of Nature" (1826, last and complete edition, 1837), &c.

To recount the theories which are here proposed, in their bare principles, would be by no means interesting ; and as we have somewhat fully explained the Natur-philosophie of Schelling in a former chapter, our readers can gain from thence an idea of the method in which the same subjects are treated by the author now before us. Suffice it to remark, that, beginning with the fixed stars and the *bare framework* of nature, he attempts to write her complete history through the regions of inorganised masses, plants, and animals, up to the point where the philosophy of nature hands us over to the philosophy of mind. Recommencing his labours, he then sets out upon another journey, and proposes to write the "History of the Soul;" and

here it is, that we have peculiarly to look for his metaphysical opinions. In accomplishing this history, he shows, first, how the soul is, as it were, reflected in and by the body ; how it gives form and perfection to our material organisation. Next entering upon the analysis of mind, he brings forward a somewhat remarkable doctrine, setting forth the distinction between the soul (*Seele*) and the spirit (*Geist*). The soul is the inferior part of our intellectual nature—that which shows itself most distinctly in the phenomena of our dreams—the power of which also is situated in the material constitution of the brain. The spirit, on the contrary, is that part of our nature which tends to the purely rational, the lofty, the divine. The doctrine of the natural and the spiritual man, which we find in the writings of St Paul, may perhaps have formed the basis upon which Schubert founded this system of mental dualism. Whatever may have been its origin, however, it forms a very prominent feature in his metaphysical analysis, and affords an explanation of many facts, which is by no means unreasonable or worthless.

The feelings, as might be anticipated, play a very considerable part in Schubert's psychology. Feeling, in reference to the *soul*, is the great impulse of all our outward actions, more especially when, by a ray from heaven, it acquires a moral character, and impels us to what is good and virtuous. Feeling, however, with reference to the *spirit*, is of a far higher character, and appears to us in the form of

faith—faith, which conquers sense, and sight, and the power of death—faith, which enables us to realise the Divine, and which gives us at once the longing after, and the full conviction of an immortal life beyond the tomb. Thus, starting from nature in its most original forms, our author pursues his investigations through the whole region of inanimate and animated existence, passes from the world of matter to that of mind, and follows the course of our faculties and feelings, in their gradual rise from the inferior to the superior, until he at length attempts to solve the mysteries of our spiritual being, by the development of that higher faith, which binds us by close affinities to the immortal and the divine. In brief, Schubert may be regarded as one of the best, the most moral, and perhaps we may say, the most religious writers, who have sought to combine the objective philosophy of Schelling, with the mystical tendencies of the school of Jacobi.

The next writer of the same school that we have to mention, is Franz Xaver Baader. Unlike Schubert, he begins with the subjective point of view, and from the central region of the soul itself, attempts to spread a new light over the whole realm of being at large. His writings consist, for the most part, of lectures, short treatises, and articles furnished for the philosophical periodicals of the day, in which we find *glimpses* into the different regions of metaphysical truth, rather than a complete and connected system. Of all the philosophers

who have taken from Schelling the idea of a dynamical theory of nature, Baader is decidedly the most mystical. There is, indeed, comparatively little in his works to remind one of Jacobi, but a strong affinity for the mystics of earlier times. It is evident that the author has studied in the school of Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus, and Tauler, and adopted at once their mysticism and their spirituality.

As an opponent of the modern pantheism, Baader stands preeminent. He has seized the precise points in which it is most vulnerable, and dealt some of the most sturdy blows against the all-absorbing fatalism to which it inevitably leads. Incapable as are his writings ever to form a distinct school of philosophy, yet there are few men who have scattered around them more fruitful and suggestive ideas; few who have combated more earnestly for the principles which contain the most precious germs of metaphysical, moral, and spiritual truth.

To pursue the windings of the mystical and theosophic systems, which the inordinate speculations of modern times have thrown up to light, would be anything but easy, and anything but instructive; and we should be tempted at once to close our list of authors, chosen from an extraordinary number of names, all candidates for the honour of a philosophical reputation, were not the name of Henry Steffens too prominent, as a mystic natural philosopher, to be passed over in silence. Steffens was born in Sweden in

1773, but, since the commencement of the present century, has belonged almost entirely to Germany.¹ The fact which places this voluminous author somewhat prominently forward in the philosophical world, is this—that while some of the followers of Schelling have verged more to the subjective, and others to the objective side of his system, Steffens has seized upon the middle point, and laboured with much ability to show the absolute unity of nature and spirit. “The totality of the school of Schelling,” remarks Michelet, “is most manifestly set forth in the writings of Steffens. 1. In his ‘Principles of Natural Science philosophically considered’ (1806), he comes near to Oken, and to the formalism of the philosophy of nature. 2. The spiritual side of our knowledge is shown forth in his ‘Caricaturen des Heiligsten’ (1821). 3. In the third series of his writings, the *unity* of nature and spirit is developed, from various points of view. *First*, eternal nature is considered historically, as representing itself in time, and, consequently, as a spiritual thing—an idea which Herder had already pointed out, and which Steffens regards as the great theme of his life, the highest aim of all his investigations. To this belongs his ‘Contributions to an inward Natural History of the Earth,’ and his ‘Polemical Treatise towards the Furtherance of Speculative Physics.’ In the first part of the latter work,

¹ Steffens died a year or two ago. His “Nachgelassene Werke” were published in 1846, with a preface by Schelling, the last word which that veteran in philosophy has spoken to the public.

he shows how the original union of spirit with nature had been an ancient opinion—that, *e. g.*, of Roger Bacon; how the mechanical view of physics had become entirely predominant in the seventeenth century; and how, in the eighteenth century, men began to rise from the bare material relations to the dynamical opposition of magnetism, of electricity, and of chemistry, *i. e.*, to a dynamical system of physics; until, in our own century, the remarkable union of all the main phenomena of nature, under the idea of one spirit, has introduced the dawn of natural science, *properly so called.* * * * *Secondly*, in his ‘Anthropology,’ Steffens has exhibited mind or spirit as something reposing upon nature, and remaining in close unity with it, much in the sense of Schubert. *Thirdly*, he proceeds at length to the mystical-religious point of view, after the example of Baader, and reproaches himself with the boldness of his earlier knowledge. To this period belong his writings on ‘False Theology and True Faith,—A Voice out of the Churches,’ and his treatise, entitled ‘How I again became a Lutheran, and what to me Lutheranism is.’”¹

The three authors above mentioned form but a

¹ Steffens was a man of vast versatility of genius. In his “Grundzüge der Phil. Naturwissenschaft,” he has traversed the sciences of mineralogy, geology, and natural science at large. In his “Anthropology,” he has carried the torch of philosophy into the regions of physiology, and the constitution of human nature. In the “Caricaturen des Heiligsten,” he discusses the philosophy of politics and society. And, lastly, in his religious writings, he has attempted to throw light upon the province of theology, both natural and revealed.

very small portion of those whom the captivating philosophy of Schelling incited to similar investigations. Of these, the majority became mystics, and even Schelling himself cannot be freed from the charge of decided mysticism, in most of his later productions. The course of the German mysticism, therefore, as a whole, now lies before us. Retracing our steps to Jacobi, we see him introducing into the speculative spirit of the age, the element of faith, as a thing absolutely necessary to the perfection of our knowledge, and the due explanation of the phenomena of the human mind. This faith-element was combined, first, with the current Kantism of the age, and gave rise to the somewhat sober and modified mysticism of Krug, Fries, and Calker; next, finding its way into the subjective idealism of Fichte, it produced the paradoxical mysticism of Schlegel, and the Christian Platonism of Schleiermacher and Novalis; and, lastly, obtaining a lodgment in the objective philosophy of Schelling, it brought to light those multifarious mystical interpretations of natural phenomena, to a few only of which we have now reverted.

The writers I last mentioned, as advocates of modern mysticism in Germany, are the latest representatives of the present age, and in them, therefore, we recognise the exact point to which the mystical tendency has just reached, and with which, accordingly, the present historical inquiry into the German mysticism must terminate. We only add one remark in conclusion. The whole of the intellec-

tual phenomena we have just been reviewing, originated from a new philosophical element, which Jacobi added to the pure logical rationalism of Kant. What is this element? In art, it is called *genius*, in poetry, *inspiration*, in philosophy, *feeling*, in religion, *faith*, in life, *enthusiasm*. Be it what it may by name, there is assuredly a spontaneous movement of the soul, an intuitive apprehension of moral and spiritual truth, developing itself sometimes in meditation, sometimes in action, which gives rise to some of the most striking phenomena of human life. This movement is the basis of mysticism. Mysticism, then, when confined within its proper limits, like all the other philosophical systems, is truth; it is only when this spontaneous element in the soul is elevated over the calm reflection of the understanding and the reason, that it is likely to lead into extravagance and folly.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE ECLECTIC SCHOOL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

SECT. I.—*Rise and Progress of Modern Eclecticism in France.*

THE school of philosophy, which forms the subject of the present section, might have been treated of as one branch of modern idealism, and would not have found an inappropriate place at the end of our fifth chapter. As, however, eclecticism is not *necessarily* idealistic in its tendency, we have thought it, upon the whole, more convenient to devote a separate portion of our work to the development of its rise and progress, more especially in France.

The current philosophy in France, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, was that which we have already portrayed under the title of *ideology*. So firmly fixed, indeed, was this system in the schools of instruction, and in the very habits of the thinking part of the population, that it seems necessary in the outset to offer some conjectures on the probable causes of its rapid decline.

These causes we shall be able to trace by observing the various movements, by which the reaction against sensationalism was gradually developed.

The first indications of discontent towards the reigning system made their appearance amongst some of the more spiritual of the theological writers of the age. Ideology was without a religion — without ought of the Divine and mysterious — without any means of satisfying the irrepressible cravings of the human mind after God and immortality. Even Bonaparte himself is known to have commented with severity upon its utter incapability of showing any thing great in human destiny. Considering, then, the force of man's spiritual nature, there is no wonder that there were many prepared, on theological grounds, to combat a philosophy that could lead to so dreary a view of human life.

Again, Ideology, by reducing all the finer sentiments of the mind to mere nervous susceptibility, stripped them of that poetic colouring, which the doctrines of spiritualism so well knew how to throw around them. The poet, the critic, and the man of taste, possess by nature a kind of spiritual philosophy, which, if not embodied in any distinct doctrines, yet shows itself with equal certainty in the excursions of their fancy, and the refinement of their feelings. Those writers of the age, who, like St Pierre, Chateaubriand, and Madame de Staël, embodied in their thoughts a tone, either of religious sentimentalism or of poetical fervour, must have contrasted very strikingly with the philosophers,

who sought to reduce even the most ethereal of our feelings to the mere pulsations of the nervous system. Thus, if there were none ready to contest the dogmas of sensationalism upon scientific grounds, there were many who tacitly refuted them by the philosophy of their feelings, and the spiritualism of their sentiments.

Another discouragement was thrown in the path of ideology, by the rapidity with which the power of Bonaparte, during the first decade of the present century, reached its climax. In addition to the ardour for military glory, by which he dazzled the universal mind of his country, and which was any thing but favourable to such philosophical pursuits, it is well known that he had a personal antipathy to the so termed ideologues, which he took little care to conceal. Accordingly, in all the schemes for education which issued from his government, the study of this philosophy was thrown altogether in the back-ground, and its cultivation attended rather with the chance of penalty than the expectation of reward.

These several circumstances all tended to foster the doubts, which some even of the ideologists themselves began to evince respecting the soundness of their principles. The rage for materialism had, in fact, gone by; the arguments by which it could be upheld, were exhausted; the whole extent of its possible influence (an influence not much to be vaunted) was now made visible; the charm of its novelty was fled. Those who were the professed

metaphysicians of the age began to feel that, if any further progress was to be made in their department, it must be by a *change* of system, rather than a closer investigation of their old one; and that, if the mysteries of the spirit of man were ever to be sounded, other lines must be used than those furnished by sensation alone. Our present object, therefore, will be to trace these indications of reaction from their first commencement, and show in what manner they have gradually led to the present system of French eclecticism.

In doing this, our first attention must be directed to M. Laromiguière, who was originally reckoned amongst the abettors of ideology, and formed one of the celebrated society who assembled in the retreat of Auteuil. This elegant philosophical writer was born in the year 1756, and having taught metaphysics for some time at Toulouse, removed to Paris towards the commencement of the present century, where he soon became a professor in the normal school. With the exception of a few miscellaneous pieces, his chief reputation as a philosopher rests upon the lectures which he delivered, *ex cathedrâ*, during the years 1811, 1812, 1813, and which were published in two volumes, with the unassuming title of "*Leçons de Philosophie*."¹

M. Laromiguière had been educated a zealous pupil of Condillac; and, although he was led by

¹ Several editions of these Lectures have since appeared. The references are here given to the 4th edition, 3 vols. 12mo, published in Paris in 1826.

his own superior genius for mental analysis to depart widely from the opinions of his master, yet he ever seemed to do so with reluctance, and everywhere attempted to make his own opinions coincide as much as possible with the views advanced in the "Traité des Sensations." There were, as Cousin expresses it, in M. Laromiguière *two men*, the ancient and the modern; the disciple and the adversary of Condillac; and it is the struggle between these opposed spirits, which forms the great leading peculiarity in all his writings. If, therefore, our author did not make that progress towards a more reflective philosophy, which was soon afterwards made by those who followed in his footsteps, yet at any rate, to him must be awarded the honour of the first great struggle to throw off the chains of the reigning authority.

The philosophy of M. Laromiguière is by no means difficult to expound; his clear, consecutive, and precise habit, both of thinking and writing, affording ample means of doing so with ease and distinctness. In the volumes to which we have just alluded, there are two great subjects which are brought under discussion; the first is, the analysis and classification of the human faculties; the other is, the nature and origin of our ideas: and from each of these portions we can derive a tolerably accurate insight into the spirit of his philosophy. Let us first advert to his classification of the *faculties*. Here, instead of beginning, as Condillac does, with the great fundamental faculty of

sensation, he substitutes in its place that of *attention*; from which, as the basis, he derives in regular succession, all the other powers and capacities of the human mind.¹ These powers and capacities he separates into two great classes—those of the *understanding* and those of the *will*; not regarding, indeed, either the understanding or the will, as designating separate and individual faculties, but using them simply as general terms by which to denote two distinct *assemblages* of mental phenomena. The faculties of the understanding he reduces to these three:—1. Attention; 2. Comparison; 3. Reasoning. Of these three, attention is the fundamental principle from which the other two proceed; and of these two, again, the phenomena usually denoted by the words memory, judgment, imagination, &c., are simply modifications. Thus there are, according to M. Laromiguière, three generic powers of the understanding, from which all the specific or subordinate phenomena proceed. Since, however, these three generic powers in their last analysis are all seen to be included in the first, the whole of the phenomena of the understanding may be said to spring from the one great fundamental faculty of *attention*.²

If we now turn to the will, we find, according to M. Laromiguière, a complete parallel existing between its phenomena and those we have just been

¹ For his analysis of Condillac's classification, see Part I. lec. iii. For the statement of his own system, see Part I. lec. iv.

² *Leçons*, vol. i. p. 104, *et seq.*

considering. The foundation of all voluntary action in man is *desire*; and in the same manner as we have already seen the two latter faculties of the understanding spring from the first, so now we see springing from desire, as the basis, the two corresponding phenomena of *preference* and *liberty*.¹ These three powers, then, being established, all the subordinate powers of the will are without difficulty reducible to them, so that, at length, we have the complete man viewed in two different aspects:—in the one, as an intellectual; in the other, as a voluntary being; the chief facts of his intellectual exactly corresponding to those of his voluntary existence. Lastly, to bring the whole system to a state of complete unity, our author shows that desire itself is, strictly speaking, a peculiar form of attention; that the fundamental principle, therefore, of our intellectual and voluntary life, is the same; that the power of attention, broadly viewed, (being, in fact, but another expression for the natural activity of the human mind,) is the point from which the whole originally proceeds.²

Now, the contrast between this psychology and that of Condillac is sufficiently striking; the one

¹ Leçons, vol. i. p. 113, *et seq.*

² “La liberté naît de la préférence, la préférence du désir: le désir est la direction des facultés d’l’entendement, qui naissent les unes, des autres, le raisonnement de la comparaison, et la comparaison de l’attention. Par conséquent, il est prouvé que la pensée, ou la faculté de penser, qui embrasse toutes les facultés de l’âme, dérive de l’attention, c’est-à-dire du pouvoir que nous avons de concentrer notre activité et notre sensibilité sur un seul objet pour les distribuer ensuite sur plusieurs.” Vol. i. p. 125.

being indeed, in a measure, directly opposed to the other. The latter system assumes *sensation*, not only as its point of departure, but as the formative principle of every other faculty; the former builds up the whole upon *attention*. The one lays at the foundation of our whole intellectual and active life a faculty purely *passive* in its nature, and regards all phenomena as simply transformations of it; the other assumes a primitive power, the very essence of which is *activity*, and makes all our other powers more or less share in this essence. The one deduces all the facts of consciousness from the impulse of the world without upon the mind within; the other derives them from the reaction of the mind within upon the world without. So widely had the pupil, perhaps almost unconsciously to himself, departed from the philosophy of his master.

The second part of M. Laromiguière's lectures refers to the origin of our ideas. Here, in order to swerve as little as possible in appearance from the philosophy of Condillac, he makes the whole *material* of our knowledge come from our *sensibility*. Condillac had derived all our ideas from sensation in its ordinary and contracted sense; Locke had derived them from sensation and reflection, thus taking in the active as well as the passive element to account for the phenomena of the case; M. Laromiguière, however, explains his meaning of the word *sensibility* in such a manner, as to make the foundation still broader than that of Locke himself. *Sensibility*, he shows, is of four kinds:—1. That

produced by the action of external things upon the mind—this is sensation in the ordinary sense of the word ; 2. That produced by the action of our faculties upon each other—this is equivalent to Locke's reflection ; 3. That which is produced by the recurrence and comparison of several ideas together, giving us the perception of *relations* ; and 4. That which is produced by the contemplation of human actions, as right or wrong ; which is the moral faculty.¹

In this theory, it appears at once evident that there is a secret revolt from the doctrines of sensationalism. Our author, in explaining his notion of the sensibility of the human mind, recedes step by step, until he has virtually undone all that had been attempted in the analysis of our simpler notions, from Locke down to his own times. From sensation, as the most obvious form of our sensibility, he goes back to reflection ; from reflection he goes back to the power of perceiving relations, *i. e.*, to judgment in its primitive form ; from judgment he comes at last to the moral faculty, viewing it, also, as an original and irreducible fact in our constitution. The very manner, indeed, in which these four classes of phenomena are presented, namely, as different branches of our sensitive life, shows the struggle which was going on in the mind of the author, between the system he had left and the broader and deeper views which were opening before him. This struggle, however, was the harbinger of

¹ Pt. II. Leçon iii.

better days. The activity of the human mind was again vindicated ; the majesty of reason restored ; and, what was still more important, the moral faculty was again raised from its ruins to sway its sceptre over human actions and purposes. M. Laromiguière, the ideologist, will always be viewed as the day-star of French eclecticism.¹

Hitherto there was no *open* revolt manifested against the authority of Condillac in the public expositions of philosophy. France was, as yet, entirely pledged to sensationalism ; and although deeper thoughts were stirring in the minds of those who, like M. Laromiguière, were dissatisfied with the reigning system, yet no direct hostility was shown to the system itself. To show this was reserved for M. Royer-Collard, whom we now accordingly introduce to the notice of our readers. Peter Paul Royer-Collard was born in the year 1763, and began his career as an advocate in the French Parliament. During the Revolution, he was one of those who, while advocating the principles of popular liberty, yet endeavoured to restrain the outbreaks of licentiousness by which that age was unhappily characterised. In the year 1810 he was made Dean of the Faculty of Letters, in the Normal School at Paris ; and it was in the lectures which he delivered there, from the year 1811 to

¹ Those who wish to see a masterly estimate of M. Laromiguière's philosophical character, should read the funeral oration delivered by M. Cousin, and inserted in his "Fragments Philosophiques." Also M. Maine de Biran's Examination of his "Leçons de Philosophie."

1814, that he laid the foundation for his reputation in philosophy. It is to be lamented, however, that so small a portion of these lectures has been given to the public through the medium of the press. An introductory discourse forms the whole of what was published under his own eye; and although his papers have been admirably arranged and edited by M. Jouffroy, as an adjunct to his translation of Dr Reid's philosophy, yet the real mind and spirit of an author must necessarily suffer much when they are only known through the medium of posthumous fragments. We shall attempt, however, as far as our means will admit, to give the main features of our author's metaphysical system.

M. Royer-Collard, on assuming the chair of metaphysics at Paris, boldly commenced by setting at defiance the whole authority of Condillac, and the ideologists; and though he stood alone, without any kindred mind to aid and sympathise with him in his undertaking, yet he firmly persisted in declaring himself the advocate of a *new* philosophy. The student who has thoroughly mastered the controversy of Reid against the scepticism of his day, will have no difficulty in understanding the position which was held by M. Royer-Collard, as the professed opponent of sensationalism. Well instructed in the philosophy of Scotland, and deeply imbued with its spirit, he saw that he had to direct the same arguments against Condillac, as Reid had directed against Hume. He clearly comprehended that the ideal system, which upheld the scepticism of the one,

equally upheld the sensationalism of the other, and that by shaking this foundation he should destroy *every* edifice which could be erected upon it.

To make this more evident, we must remind the reader, that Hume's argument proceeded somewhat in the following manner. First, let it be conceded that all our knowledge of external things is communicated through the medium of *ideas*, and that its veracity depends *solely* upon the inward ideal representation being correct. This point being established, it follows, that we can never attain to any certainty with regard to the existence of the external world; it being perfectly impossible to verify the accuracy of the image by a comparison of it with the original. Once grant, then, that *all* our knowledge consists in *ideas*, and we can never get beyond them; the passage from the ideal to the real can never be discovered; and even if it could be discovered, still the *real* itself must remain to us perfectly unknown. M. Royer-Collard perceived that if we admit this hypothesis at the commencement to be correct, the whole train of reasoning based upon it was irrefragable: and he still further perceived, that the doctrine of Condillac virtually included in it all these consequences. If, as that philosopher maintained, all our knowledge is derived from our sensations, if our whole consciousness, in fact, consists of nothing else, then why should we attribute an objective reality to one sensation more than another—why should we suppose, for example, that the sensation of magnitude and extension has

a real and material object answering to it, while that of a sound or an odour has none?

Following up the reasoning of Dr Reid, our author showed with great force and perspicuity, that in connexion with certain sensations we are led by the very constitution of our minds to supply the further idea of an external object, from which those particular sensations proceed. Reid termed these primitive judgments principles of common sense; Stewart called them primary laws of reason; M. Royer-Collard considered it to be a kind of *intellectual instinct*, by which we pass from the inward sensation to the outward reality. The working of this instinct he explains under the idea of a natural process of induction, which leads us infallibly to conclude from the unceasing variety of sensations which crowd in upon us, not only the real existence of external objects, but also much concerning their nature and properties. So far, then, our author trod in the footsteps of his Scottish instructors, and wielded with admirable success the weapons of which they had first proved the utility.

Next to this controversy, M. Royer-Collard proceeded to the analysis of our fundamental *ideas*. The notions we possess of substance, of cause, of time, of space, of eternity, of infinity, &c., were all brought under review; and, by a most careful investigation, it was shown that they do not bear the character of abstractions, or generalisations, made from experience, but that they are primitive *a priori* notions, with which the mind is furnished

as starting points for all its knowledge. After this, he proceeded to explain the notions of right and wrong, of duty and obligation, of all, in a word, which peculiarly distinguishes our moral nature; and tearing to shreds the flimsy reasoning of Helvétius and Volney, he drew forth from the depths of the human consciousness the indestructible element of eternal and immutable morality, which they had alike rejected in theory, and too much despised in practice. "We recall," says one of his biographers, "the effect which his whole address upon this subject, so grave, so powerful, so full of emotion, produced upon the minds of the hearers. He arrested the understandings which he did not gain, or which did not fully comprehend him; he captivated the rest; he elevated, fortified, and filled them with wisdom and with reason; he played the same part as did Socrates with the youth, who listened to his instructions."

From this brief sketch of M. Royer-Collard's labours in the department of philosophy, it is sufficiently evident, that he had reconsidered and recast the whole method of philosophical research in his own country. No longer content with the attempts which the ideological school had been making to explain the facts of our moral and intellectual nature, by an appeal to external influences, he felt and acknowledged the existence of a world within, the facts of which have to be observed, classified, and reasoned upon, just in the same manner as the facts of the world without. He entered the hidden

chamber of the human mind, with the lamp of induction in his hand; and if his life was neither long enough, nor calm enough, to inspect the whole region which he had opened to view, yet, having pointed out the way, he did not want those, among his admiring pupils, who were ready to enter into his labours, and carry them forward towards their completion. Before we proceed, however, to exhibit the effects of his instructions upon the progress of mental science, we must pause to notice a contemporary author, whose extraordinary philosophical genius has left many traces behind it, not only in France, but in various parts of Europe beside.

The author to whom we now allude is M. Maine de Biran, who was born in 1766, and died, too soon for the interests of philosophy, in 1824. Maine de Biran was one of the celebrated society of Auteuil, to which we have before alluded, and from which all the modern philosophy of France has virtually proceeded. In the year 1800, the National Institute offered a prize for the best essay "On the Influence of Habit upon the Faculty of Thinking," which was awarded to M. Maine de Biran, as the successful competitor. In this essay he showed his entire predilection for the principles of ideology, accounting for all the phenomena of the human consciousness by the action and reaction of the nervous system. Soon after this (in 1803) he bore off another prize for an essay "On the Decomposition of the Faculty of Thinking," in which essay he showed the first signs of defection from the philosophy of

Condillac, and the first germs of those peculiar sentiments, for which he afterwards became celebrated. In 1807 he bore off fresh honours from the Academy of Sciences of Berlin, for a memoir on the question "Whether there is in man an immediate internal intuition, and in what it differs from the perceptions of the senses." Other honours he gained shortly after from Copenhagen, for an exposition of "The mutual relation of man's moral and physical constitution." In both these last essays he departed still further than ever from his original views, and gradually brought his new philosophy to maturity. Anxious to impart his doctrines to France, he embodied them in a short work, which he entitled "An Examination of the Lectures of M. Laromiguière;" and finally crowned his philosophical labours by his magnificent article on Leibnitz in the "Universal Biography."¹

The great fact of consciousness which M. Maine de Biran developed with so much perseverance, was that of the *activity* of the human mind—the power of the *will*. This fact had been entirely neglected by the sensational school, which, only intent upon

¹ Several philosophical treatises of M. Maine de Biran, beside those above mentioned, have been published since his death. A posthumous work, entitled "Nouvelles Considérations sur les Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme," was edited by M. Cousin in 1834, together with the examination of M. Laromiguière, and the article on Leibnitz. In 1841, three vols. entitled "Œuvres Philosophiques de Maine de Biran," were also edited by M. Cousin, containing all the other treatises above referred to, beside some additional opuscula and fragments.

the influence of the outward and material, had altogether banished one at least of our three fundamental notions. It was M. Biran's peculiar merit to recall this notion from oblivion, and to re-establish it with due honour as a great and leading idea in our intellectual existence. Already, in his Essay on the decomposition of thought, he began to depart from his former physiological tendencies, and to assert the distinct reaction of some active immaterial principle upon the intimations of sense.¹ In the memoirs of Berlin and Copenhagen he placed the activity of the human mind in a still clearer light; and in his next published work—that on M. Laromiguière—he fully establishes the doctrine, that the soul is a *cause*, a force, an active principle; and that the phenomena of consciousness can never be explained until we clearly apprehend the *voluntary* nature of its thoughts and impulses.

Not content, however, with this, he began next to ask whether there was anything whatever within the bounds of existence, which might not equally be reduced to the notion of a *power* or force; whether the idea of substance itself is to us anything more than that of a *cause*; whether, in a word, the dynamical theory of the universe was not the one grounded upon the most solid and philosophical basis. To this notion he at length yielded his full assent, and in his article on Leibnitz avowed himself a believer in the spiritual monadology advocated

¹ See particularly Part i. sec. 2, on the Principle of Causality; and Part ii. chap. 2, on Power, Will, and Personality.

by that great founder of the German idealism. In the whole of the process by which our author had gradually advanced from the ideology of Cabanis to the absolute dynamical spiritualism of Leibnitz, he had relied simply upon his own power of reflection. Disciple of none, he had philosophised simply within the region of his own consciousness; so that whatever merit some may deny him, there are none, assuredly, who can reject his claim to that of complete originality. "Of all the masters of France," remarks M. Cousin, "Maine de Biran, if not the greatest, is unquestionably the most original. M. Laromiguière only continued the philosophy of Condillac, modifying it in a few important points. M. Royer-Collard came from the Scottish philosophy, which, with the rigour and natural power of his reason, he would have infallibly surpassed, had he completely followed out the labours which form only the least solid part of his glory. As for *myself*, I come at the same time from the Scottish and German school. M. Maine de Biran alone comes only from himself, and from his own meditations."¹

After this general notice we must attempt to afford our readers a glance into some of the peculiar tenets of the philosophy now under consideration. In order to unfold the fact and expound the nature of man's natural activity (the hinge upon which the entire system turns), M. Maine de Biran analyses

¹ Preface to the "Fragments Philosophiques."

the whole of what is contained or implied in a given action ; for example, a movement of the arm. When I move my arm there are three things to be observed :—1. The consciousness of a voluntary effort ; 2. The consciousness of a movement produced ; and 3. A fixed relation between the effort on the one hand and the movement on the other. Now, the source or cause of the whole movement is the *will* ; and this term *will* we now use as virtually synonymous with self. Whether we say I moved my arm, or my will moved it, the sentiment is exactly identical. Hence the notions of *cause*, of *will*, of *self*, we find to be fundamentally the same ; and several truths are by this means brought to light of great importance in metaphysical science.¹

First, it becomes evident that we possess a natural activity, the seat of which is in the will ; so that whether we regard man as a thinking or an acting being, yet it is the will which alike presides over and regulates the flow of our thoughts, or the course of our actions. Secondly, we infer that the will is the foundation of personality ; that my will is virtually myself. And, thirdly, we infer that to will is to *cause*, and that from the inward consciousness of volition, viewed in connexion with the effect produced, we gain our first notion of causality. These three points, as Cousin has shown us, embrace in a small compass the whole philosophy of M. Maine de Biran. He first seizes, with admirable sagacity, the principle of all human activity, as resident in

¹ Preface to the “Nouvelles Considérations, p. 10.

the power of the will, exemplifying it even in the case of those muscular movements which may appear to the unreflecting to be simply the result of nervous excitement. Having established the principle of activity, as residing in the will, he proceeds to identify the will with our very personality itself, showing, that the soul is in its nature a force, the very essence of which is not to be acted upon, but to act. Finally, he proves that we gain our first notion of causality from the consciousness of our own personal effort; and that, having once observed the conjunction of power exerted, and effect produced, in this particular case, we transfer the notion of cause thus originated into the objective world, and conclude by analogy the necessity of a sufficient power existing for every given effect.¹

M. Maine de Biran having thus drawn forth, from the depths of his own consciousness, these undoubted facts of our voluntary existence—facts which the sensational school had neglected or denied—proceeded to show how these facts avail to explain the nature of the human faculties, and the origin of our fundamental ideas. Here, however, he began to carry his principles to an extreme, which led him from his original attachment to sensationalism, at length, into the opposite theory of pure idealism. First of all, in the ardour with

¹ These results may be seen partly in the *Mémoire* “*De la Décomposition de la Pensée*,” but more clearly in the “*Nouvelles Considérations*,” Pt. I. sec. 1, and Pt. II. sec. 1 and 3; also in the “*Examen des Leçons de Philosophie*,” sec. 8 and 9.

which he applied the powers of the will to the elucidation of the facts of our consciousness, he was induced to neglect those other phenomena, which spring forth, not from our voluntary, but from our rational nature. Hence, as we before showed, he threw a doubt over the notion of *substance*, as being a purely *rational* idea, and proposed to account for it under the notion of *cause* or *force*. This principle expanded, naturally led to a dynamical theory of physics, and was the ground on which our author gave in his adherence to the monadology of Leibnitz, as being the best explanation of the material universe upon the dynamical hypothesis.¹

Had he rested here, however, it might have been difficult to show that he had carried his notion of causality too far, the dynamical system of the universe being much more easy to deride than to disprove; but in his limitation of the principle of causality to the idea of our own *personal* effort, he showed the evident germ of pure subjective idealism. That we derive our first notion of cause from the consciousness of our own voluntary power of action, there can be little doubt; but M. Maine de Biran proceeds to show that our *whole notion* of causality is but the transference of this consciousness to the objective world. In doing this, he strips the category of causality of its necessary and universal character, and admits a principle, the result of which was perhaps unseen by himself, but which we have fully carried out in the idealism of Fichte. The

¹ Doctrine Phil. de Leibnitz.

universe, affirms M. de Biran, consists of certain *powers* or causes which are in operation ; and these powers or causes are only known as objective realisations of our own inward personal effort. In other words, everything is a power, and all power is conceived of only as *my own* power. This principle duly expanded makes *self* the absolute ground of everything, and must ultimately bring the subjective form of ideal philosophy to its well-known climax.¹

It is true, M. Maine de Biran did not live to evolve these results ; but, once shut up within his own subjectivity, there can be little doubt but that, if he had developed his whole system with the same logical rigour with which he sketched it out, we must have had a second edition of Fichte's philosophy indigenous to France. It was his intense absorption in the contemplation of the power of the will—in the fundamental notion of *self*—that led to the neglect of the other two elements ; giving us another proof that the closest analysis, whilst evolving truth, ever errs, from its very concentration upon the question which it illustrates, and showing the importance of an enlightened eclecticism, in aiding the true advancement of philosophy. We must now come, therefore, to consider the metaphysical labour and services of him, whom we may term the founder of modern eclecticism in France—I mean Victor Cousin.

M. Cousin was born in the year 1792, and entered,

¹ See M. Cousin's refutation of M. de Biran, in his preface to the "Nouvelles Considérations," p. 27, *et seq.*

whilst quite young, upon a course of instruction in the normal school, which was to fit him to be himself an instructor of the youth of his country. In 1811, he had the good fortune to attend the captivating lectures of M. Laromiguière, and, following them up soon after by the still more deep and earnest philosophy of M. Royer-Collard, he determined to devote his whole life to the investigation of moral and metaphysical truth. So extraordinary was the aptitude which he manifested in this department, that on the retirement of M. Royer-Collard, in the year 1815, he was at once appointed to the vacant chair of philosophy in the normal school. For five years he carried on his labours there with the utmost assiduity. Ardent, and even passionate, in his love for metaphysical speculation, he worked onwards with untiring energy towards the reformation of the French philosophy; and being endowed by nature with an eloquence extremely rare in minds devoted to the most abstruse subjects, he soon fired the youth who attended his lectures with an enthusiasm kindred to his own.¹ In the year 1820, however, his progress was arrested. Looked upon with suspicion by the contemptible government which had been reinstated at Paris, by the wealth and blood of all Europe, he was obliged to retire from his office in the normal school into private life. This event, however unjustifiable in itself, yet contributed in the end to the speedier advancement of philosophy

¹ His three earliest pupils, MM. Jouffroy, Damiron, and Bautain, attest the efficiency of his instructions as a professor.

in France. Having become already versed in the principles of Kant and Fichte, and having two years previously spent some time at Heidelberg and Munich in company with Jacobi, Schelling, and Hegel, Cousin now embraced the opportunity of making another journey beyond the Rhine, and becoming more nearly acquainted with the idealistic philosophy as it then existed in Germany. In Berlin he renewed his acquaintance with *Hegel*, who had then become the most brilliant star in the philosophical hemisphere of that country; and it is from the study of *his* ideas on the philosophy of history, and the history of philosophy, that the most attractive features of the modern eclecticism have to be dated. In 1828, being recalled from his banishment, he delivered lectures on the history of modern philosophy, before a brilliant auditory, in Paris, and raised his reputation, both for eloquence and philosophy, to the highest pitch. In 1832, according to that noble policy which reckons learning and wisdom the best title to aristocracy, he was made a peer of France, and in 1840 was created Minister of Public Instruction. His published works on philosophy consist—1. of a succession of brief articles, called “Philosophical Fragments,” in the two admirable prefaces to which, we have at once the most lucid and succinct protraiture of his views and doctrines. 2. Several courses of Lectures on the History of Philosophy, delivered at Paris, as above stated. 3. A course of Philosophy, in thirty-eight Lectures, founded on the fundamental notions of the true, the

beautiful, and the good. 4. Translations or Editions of Plato, Aristotle, Proclus, and other ancient and modern philosophers; and, lastly, a course of admirable Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant.¹

This brief sketch of the life of M. Cousin is sufficient at once to point out the schools in which he has studied, and the influences under which he has lived, thought, and written. He came upon the stage exactly at the moment when the sensational school was retiring from its prominent position in the public regard. M. Laromiguière, though himself, by profession, an ideologist, yet was virtually undermining the doctrine he professed; and M. Royer-Collard, having made an open revolt, cherished and matured in the mind of his pupil (so soon to be his successor) the desire of carrying on the reformation thus auspiciously commenced. His retirement to Germany, though compelled by a false act of arbitrary power, yet was fortunate in giving him leisure and opportunity to sink down into the quiet depths of spiritualism, by which the German philosophy is characterised; and, finally, the public approbation with which he was greeted on his return, all impelled him forward in a career, in

¹ Of *Proclus*, Cousin has published a complete edition. Another and more complete course of lectures, on the Scottish school, was also published in 1846. With the exception of the lectures on Kant and those on the Scottish philosophy (both which have appeared more recently), I have made all quotations from the Brussels edition of his works (3 vols. large 8vo, 1840).

which he seemed destined to obtain the highest distinction.

His own account of his philosophical experience is precisely in accordance with what we have just stated. "M. Laromiguière," he remarks, "initiated me into the art of decomposing thought; he exercised me to descend from the most abstract and general ideas which we now possess, to the most common sensations, as their primary origin; and to give an account of the play of the faculties, whether elementary or complex, which intervene between the two. M. Royer-Collard taught me, that if these faculties have any need of being solicited by sensation, in order to produce even the least idea, yet they are subjected in their action to certain interior conditions; to certain laws; to certain principles, which sensation does not explain, which resist all analysis, and which are the natural patrimony of the human mind. With M. de Biran I studied especially the phenomena of the will. This admirable observer taught me to disentangle, in all our notions, and even in the most simple facts of consciousness, the part of our voluntary activity—that activity in which our personality reveals itself.

"It was under this triple discipline that I was formed; and it was thus prepared that I entered, in 1815, upon the public instruction of philosophy in the normal school, and the faculty of letters.

"Before long, I had exhausted, or thought that I had exhausted, the teaching of my first masters: after France and Scotland, my eyes naturally turned

to Germany. I then learned German, and set myself to decipher, with infinite pains, the principal movements of the philosophy of Kant, without any other aid than the barbarous Latin translation of Born. I thus lived two entire years, as though buried in the depths of the Kantian psychology, and simply occupied with the passage from psychology to ontology. I have already said how psychology itself instructed me, and how I traversed the philosophy of Kant. That of Fichte could not detain me long; and at the end of the year 1817, I had left the first German school behind me." After stating his acquaintance with Schelling and Hegel, M. Cousin thus refers to their relative merits, and his own obligations to them :—"The admirers of Hegel consider him as the Aristotle of another Plato; the exclusive partisans of Schelling only see in him the Wolf of another Leibnitz. However it may be with these rather lofty comparisons, no one can deny that to the master has been given a powerful invention, and to the pupil a profound reflection. Hegel has borrowed much from Schelling; and as for myself, much more feeble than either, I have borrowed from both. It were folly to reproach me with this, and it is certainly no great humility in myself to acknowledge it."¹

After these few preliminary remarks, we must now proceed to give our readers as clear an insight into the doctrines and spirit of this philosophy, as

¹ See the preface to the second edition of the "Fragments," vol. ii. p. 19.

our limited space may admit. In order to do this, we cannot follow a better guide in the arrangement of the materials, than that which the two prefaces, above alluded to, afford us. According to the statements there made, every important question in philosophy may be regarded as belonging either—1, to the *method* of investigation ; or, 2, to psychology ; or, 3, to ontology. These three heads, together with some peculiar views on the history of philosophy, pretty fully exhaust the topics which are treated of in the metaphysical system we are now considering.

I. We direct our attention to the doctrine of *method*, as set forth in the philosophy of Cousin. There are, in all, two grand methods which it is possible to follow in conducting metaphysical investigations ; and these are the rationalistic and the psychological. The rationalistic method strives to sink down at once into the very depths of existence ; to grasp the absolute or fundamental principle, from which every thing proceeds ; and then to explain all phenomena by the operation of this law. In this way, for example, Spinoza deduced everything from the idea of *substance*—regarding this as the sole and universal existence—and making all nature but different modes of its one immutable essence. Fichte found *his* absolute existence in the idea of *self*, and from the law of our personal activity, sought to explain all the objective phenomena around us. In like manner, the reader may see, by referring to our sketch of the German idealism, how Schelling

and Hegel, each assuming an absolute existence, and a fundamental law, deduced from thence the whole multiplicity of things, human and divine. This process of logically deducing all phenomena from some fundamental principle, is called by the German writers a *construction*—by ourselves it would be termed simply an *hypothesis*. Whatever plan, therefore, may be proposed for *construing* the universe, that is, for deducing the existence of all things from certain fundamental laws, this plan answers to our idea of the rationalistic method of philosophy.

The psychological method is, in many respects, directly the reverse of this. Instead of beginning with the fundamental law of our being, it first of all cautiously looks out upon the facts of human nature, which present themselves to our attention. These facts it attempts to observe and to classify; and thus gradually to discover the law or principle by which they recur. The one method is deductive, the other inductive; the one is synthetical, the other analytical; the one starts from the general, and descends to the particular; the other begins with particular facts, and ascends to the general; the one is the ancient method of philosophy applied to metaphysical truth; the other is the modern Baconian organum, carried into the region of mental science. Now, of these two methods, Cousin advocates, with all earnestness and decision, *the latter*. He considers mental science to be a science of facts, as well

as all other ; he applies the aid of observation and experiment *here*, as well as everywhere else ; in a word, he views it as one legitimate branch of inductive philosophy.

Whilst, however, he decides for the psychological method, he is careful to free it from those defects under which it has ever laboured in the hands of sensationalism. The method may prove deficient from two causes ; either from not starting with a due observation of facts as the data, or from not reasoning upon them with patience and accuracy. Locke, for example, although admirably adapted to reason upon the facts presented, did not begin with a sufficiently wide observation, and thus vitiated many of his results. The followers of Locke betrayed a still greater deficiency ; for not only did they exclude many undeniable facts of our rational and moral nature from their system, but they reasoned upon what facts they did admit in so perverted a strain, as often to change their very character, confounding all the phenomena of memory, of judgment, of the emotions, &c., with those of simple sensation. The psychological method, therefore, in the hands of Cousin, demands that we enter by reflection into the innermost chambers of the soul ; that we investigate every fact of the consciousness which presents itself there, with the utmost accuracy ; and, lastly, that, having obtained these data, we reason upon them with precision, and deduce everything which seems to be warranted by the

rules of sound logic. Such is the method by which Cousin proposes to prosecute the study of intellectual science.¹

II. We come to psychology itself, *i. e.* the application of the method just described to the elucidation of the ideas and faculties of the human mind. Admonished on the one hand by the over-simplification of the ideological school, and on the other by the very imperfect classification advanced by the Scottish system in the hands of Reid and Stewart, Cousin has taken the middle course between the two. Without entering at length into the grounds on which he has reasoned the subject out in his own mind, we state at once, that he enumerates amongst the facts of our consciousness three generic classes:—1. Those of the Will; 2. Those of the Reason; 3. Those of Sensation. 1. With regard to our natural activity, M. Cousin has adopted almost entirely the theory of M. Maine de Biran. The principal points in this theory are these two—that the whole groundwork of our activity is in the will; and that it is the will which peculiarly constitutes our distinct personality. The peculiarity of those things which possess no personality is, that they are entirely under external influence. For this reason, nature is impersonal. It has no source of power in itself; it is absolutely at the command and in the hands of some extrinsic agency. Just such, also, would man be without the will. Sensations are produced by direct impulse from the

¹ Vol. ii. pp. 11 and 12; also, vol. i. p. 247, *et seq.*

external world—ideas of pure reason arise spontaneously from the very constitution of our faculties ; both the one and the other influence us as certainly and as necessarily as outward force influences the material objects around us. It is the will alone, therefore, which makes us free agents.

Previously to the development of the will, man is but a part and parcel of the natural universe ; he is a unit which is at the absolute disposal of the forces, physical or spiritual, in the midst of which he is situated. The moment, however, we are conscious of an inward power, which we variously term activity, liberty, will, that moment we assume a new character in the world. Far from being now passively given up to the agency of other causes, we become in our turn a cause which reacts upon them, and which does its part, whether it be greater or less, in directing the future course of our life. This *will*, therefore, is in a peculiar sense *the man himself*. While his sensations and his ideas are *fatal*, originating from without (the one teaching him contingent, the other necessary truth), the determinations of the will originate from within, and going forth from our own activity, enstamp everything to which they apply with the impress of *personality*.

To this fact of liberty, moreover, there not only attaches itself the notion of personality, but, also, that of moral obligation. Sent forth, as we are, not subject to an unconditional necessity, but intrusted with the power of the will, we are under the moral *obligation* of exerting ourselves for the accomplish-

ment of our proper destiny in the world. Wherever man goes, he carries with him his *power*; and, consequently, has both his duties and his rights. Thus, in a word, the whole aspect of our moral, social, and political life, with all their spheres of activity, spring from the fundamental fact, that, endowed with liberty, we are the master of our own actions, which actions have at once to be restrained from injuring the inviolable rights of others, and to be so directed, as to fulfil the requirements of our own personal obligations.¹ Without dwelling, however, upon this branch of psychology, we pass on to that which M. Cousin has elaborated with the greatest care and ability; I mean,

2. The phenomena of our rational or intellectual life. The first thing to be accomplished in analysing this part of our nature, is to reduce the multiplicity of facts, which at once present themselves to their primary elements. Almost all philosophers have recognised the importance of such a reduction, but very few have attempted to perform it. Of these few, Aristotle classified our notions from the objective point of view; and in his table of categories, gave us a complete list of those "*summa genera*," to one of which every individual object that we have any knowledge of belongs. Kant, after the revolution of many centuries, produced another table of categories, made from the *subjective* point of view, in which table he has given us a

¹ Vol. ii. p. 33—36. See, also, the preface to the posthumous works of M. Maine de Biran, vol. ii. p. 148.

deduction of all those laws or forms of the understanding by which the material of our knowledge is shaped into distinct ideas. Cousin, again, takes up the same great problem, applies to it a closer method of analysis learned from the schools of modern idealism, and comes to the conclusion, that the whole phenomena of our reason may be reduced to *three* integrant and inseparable elements, which at once constitute its true nature, and govern all its manifestations.

The first of these elements is that which is variously expressed under the terms unity, identity, the absolute, the infinite. This we term the category of *substance*, as being the one immutable essence of the Eleatics and of Spinoza. The second of these elements is that which, in direct opposition to the former, we term plurality, difference, the conditioned, the finite, the phenomenal. This we name the category of causality, as being the principle of all change, of all the passing phenomena of the universe. Now, these two categories are not to be viewed as separated from each other—they are, in fact, indissolubly united. The absolute can only manifest itself in the phenomenal—the phenomenal only subsists in the absolute; which facts, accordingly, give rise to a third element or category, namely, that of the mutual relation which these two primary notions bear to one another. According to Cousin, these three elements manifest themselves wherever the human reason is seen in operation. They form the type, as it were, under which every

subject is viewed, and absolutely govern the whole development of an intellectual nature. To give an idea of the extensive application which is made of this doctrine of categories, we subjoin the following list, which shows them as reproduced in the various spheres of human thought or activity :—

<i>First Category.</i>	<i>Second Category.</i>	<i>Third Category.</i>
Unity	Multiplicity . . .	} Relation between them.
Absolute Space .	Bounded Space .	
{ Absolute	{ Dependent	
{ Existence	{ Existence .	
Eternity	Time	
Infinite. . . .	Finite	
Primary Cause .	Secondary Cause .	
Substance. . . .	Phenomena . . .	
Mind	Thoughts	
Beau Ideal . . .	Beau Real	
The Perfect . . .	The Imperfect. . .	
Contraction . . .	Expansion	
Subject. . . .	Object	

Thus we see thought, morals, science, the fine arts, nature, in a word, every subject of human contemplation, appearing under the type of this trinity, that emanates from the fundamental laws of our nature.¹

But now comes a most important inquiry, namely, how far these dictates of our reason possess *authority*; *i. e.*, how far we can depend upon them as unfolding truth, not merely as it appears to us, but as it really

¹ Vol. i. pp. 31-34. Vol. ii. p. 32.

exists in its own intrinsic nature. It is in the discussion of this question that we come to some of those peculiar doctrines which belong alone to Cousin and his school of philosophy. Instead of admitting that our knowledge is *relative*, that we see truth only as it stands in connexion with ourselves, that we have no other pledge of its objective accuracy than the perfection of the instrument by which we attain it, he contends that the truths with which reason is conversant are *absolute*, and that they both are, and ever must be, precisely as we see them, altogether independent of ourselves, and of the medium through which they are known. So far, indeed, he is only treading in the footsteps of his German instructors; but with respect to the grounds on which the point is argued, he stands quite by himself. There are two chief arguments which Cousin uses to prove the absoluteness of our knowledge.

The first is derived from the impersonality of reason. In this point he shows the philosophy of Kant to be altogether erroneous. That philosopher made all our necessary ideas and *a priori* conceptions to be simply the results of the subjective laws of our own minds. All abstract truth was to him but the personification, or the reflection, of our own intellectual constitution. The two forms of our sensational life—time and space; the twelve categories of the understanding; the three regulative principles of the pure reason giving origin to our notions of the soul, the universe, and God, all had,

in the Kantian system, no objective validity whatever. The germ of Fichte's subjective idealism, in fact, was already latent in the philosophy of Königsberg.

Now, to contravene these false and sceptical results, Cousin labours to prove, that the dictates of pure reason are not merely personal, that they do not simply express what *seems to be real*, according to the constitution of our own faculties, but that they are the direct reflection of absolute and eternal things. *The will*, we are conscious, is, in all its various efforts, enstamped with the impress of our personality; our volitions are our own, our desires are our own, our emotions are our own; that which we experience of all such phenomena is not experienced in the same manner by any one else. But not so in the case of our intellectual judgments. Necessary truth does not belong to one human being more than another, it has no element of human personality about it—it is the common patrimony of every rational nature—a direct emanation from God. Such being the case, the decision of reason, within its own peculiar province, possesses an authority almost Divine; if we are led astray by it, we must be led astray by a light from heaven.¹

But the question now arises, How can we strip any fact of our own consciousness of its personality? Our rational judgments and *a priori* conceptions, it might be argued, are as much phenomena of our own individual minds, as are our volitions, desires,

¹ Vol. ii. p. 32; also "Leçons sur la Philosophie de Kant," lec. 8.

or emotions. Admit that a truth *appears* to be absolute and necessary, yet it only appears so by virtue of the constitution of our own intellects. How, then, can we establish the objective validity of *anything*, when it is certain that *everything* must be seen only through the medium of our own subjective consciousness?

This leads us to the second ground on which Cousin argues the authority of reason; one which is derived from the distinction between its *spontaneous* and its *reflective* movements. When we take up a subject designedly, when we search into its evidences, when we put in array the arguments for and against, and at length draw our conclusion, we term this step a *reflective* process. The subject has, by this process, to be analysed, or *separated* into its component elements; and then the truth of the whole to be deduced from the validity of the parts. Now here, there are abundant opportunities for errors to creep in. The analysis may be incomplete—some of the parts, for example, may be omitted, others may occupy a too prominent, or too subordinate place; in a hundred different ways the conclusion, as a whole, may be vitiated. Reason, therefore, when it operates *reflectively*, can have no *absolute* authority—it is involved in all the imperfections of our own personality. There is, however, another process by which we arrive at knowledge, or truth, and that a purely spontaneous one. There are moments of thought in which the mind mingles up no element whatever of its own personality. It

does not analyse, it does not search, it does not voluntarily attend, it does not even reflect; but yet there is a distinct apperception of certain truths which it simply receives. Almost every one must be conscious, that his best thoughts come upon him like flashes of inspiration; and that when he has most lulled to rest the workings of his own *personal* effort, then most he seems to stand in the unobstructed light of eternal things. If, therefore, there be a direct and immediate apperception of absolute truth—if there be moments in which the mind receives the pure light of heaven without any intermixture of its own personality, then reason, viewed as a spontaneous principle, must possess an authority which cannot be gainsayed or resisted.

That such an internal apperception *really* exists, Cousin considers to be an unquestionable fact which may be verified by observation. We subjoin his own words. “It is by *observation*,” he remarks, “that within the penetralia of the consciousness, and at a depth to which Kant never descended, under the apparent relativeness and subjectivity of necessary principles, I have succeeded in seizing and analysing the instantaneous, but veritable fact of the spontaneous apperception of truth—an apperception which, not immediately reflecting itself, passes unperceived in the depths of the consciousness; yet is the real basis of that, which later under a logical form, and in the hands of reflection, becomes a necessary conception. All subjectivity and reflectivity expires in the spontaneity of apperception.

But the primitive light is so pure, that it is unperceived; it is the reflected light which strikes us, but often in doing so, sullies with its faithless lustre the purity of the former. Reason becomes subjective by its connexion with the free and voluntary *Me*, which is the type of all subjectivity; but in itself it is impersonal, it does not appertain any more to one than to another, it does not even appertain to humanity as a whole, its laws emanate only from itself.¹ Such is the chief ground on which Cousin repels the latent scepticism of a too subjective philosophy, and such the method by which he proposes to place the lofty authority of reason, as an evidence for objective reality, upon an immoveable foundation.

3. We pass on now to the third division of psychology; that, namely, which takes cognisance of the phenomena of *sensation*. Sensation with Cousin, as with most other philosophers, is the faculty which acquaints us with the various facts and changes of the outward world. In saying this, however, we do not pronounce anything upon the nature of objective existence around us; we do not decide, for example, whether it be material in the ordinary sense of the term, or whether it be not. That there are real phenomena, independent of ourselves—that there is a *Not-me* limiting and opposing the *Me*, our consciousness in every sensation attests; but it has yet to be shown what may be the nature, and what the

¹ Vol. ii. p. 33, "On the Impersonality and Spontaneity of Reason;" see also vol. i. pp. 44-47, 369, 388, 392, and vol. ii. p. 118.

constitution, of this outward existence. The common sense of mankind regards it as consisting of hard, impenetrable, and passive material ; in short, of *atoms*, characterised by nothing except their *vis inertię*. But is this dictate of common sense to be accepted as philosophically correct? or does metaphysical analysis place the question in any other and clearer light? Let us view the evidence of the case.

The moment we begin to reflect, we are conscious of certain states of mind produced within us from some source out of ourselves. But, by a law of our reason, whenever we experience change, either within or around us, we necessarily attribute that change to some *cause*. Hence, the primary notion we must have of the external world is that of an assemblage of causes, which are able to produce given effects. These causes, of course, we refer to some real existence, which is the principle, or substratum, on which they depend ; that is, we view them under the notion of certain finite, but independent forces, which bound, resist, or modify the exertions of our own volition. Let us put the question in another light. All our knowledge of external nature arises from internal impressions made by it, through the medium of sensation, upon the mind. But what is it that can create impressions? Manifestly *powers*, *forces*, *causes*, something that is *active* and productive of impulse: nothing that is barely passive, as matter is generally accustomed to be viewed, can possibly do so. Science, in fact, has at length come

to view all material existence in this light. The principles of mechanics are entirely comprised in the doctrines of statical and dynamical *forces* ; that is to say, all material phenomena are viewed as the productions of certain *powers*, acting with different intensities, and in different directions. "What natural philosopher," says our author, "since Euler, seeks after anything beyond forces and laws? Who speaks now of atoms? And even with respect to molecules, the newer form in which atoms have been viewed, who regards them otherwise than as an hypothesis? If this fact is incontestable, if modern science occupies itself only with forces and laws, I conclude rigorously from hence, that natural philosophy, whatever it may know, or not know, is by no means *materialistic*, that it became *spiritualistic* the very day it rejected all other methods, except observation and induction, which can lead us to nothing but forces and laws."¹

From these and similar remarks, it is abundantly evident that Cousin is to be regarded as an idealist, although certainly of a very moderate kind, when compared with the German school in which he was instructed. He does not lose sight of the fundamental idea of nature: far from it; he makes it play a very important part in his system; but he entirely denies its passive, inert, atomic character; he views it all under the type of *power* or cause; in short, he makes it homogeneous with mind, only

¹ Vol. ii. p. 37.

mind in its lower and as yet unconscious development. Perhaps we should not be wrong in placing him by the side of M. de Biran and Leibnitz, as the advocate of a dynamical system of monadology ; indeed, with reference to the latter, he says, "The more I advance, and the more I believe in philosophy, the more clearly I seem to see into the mind of that great man ; and all my progress consists in understanding him better."

Here we must close our sketch of Cousin's psychology ; brief as our explanations have necessarily been, we trust that the careful reader may gain from them a correct idea of its general nature ; and if not, he has only to betake himself to the two prefaces prefixed to the "Philosophical Fragments," in order to gain the most definite views on this part of his philosophy.

III. We must now go on to the third point which was to claim our attention, and that is, Cousin's *Ontology*. There are three different lights in which the subject of ontology has been viewed by modern philosophers. First, by the German idealistic writers it has been regarded as the starting point of all intellectual science.¹ Commencing with the notion of *being*, in its most general and abstract character, they proceed to add to it one attribute after the other, until they have philosophically constructed the entire universe. The whole problem

¹ Also by the Abbé de Lamennais in his "Esquisse d'une Philosophie."

of the German metaphysics is, in fact, to determine what is the prime absolute essence from which all things proceed, and then to expand the *law* by which bare existence rises, through all the multiplicity of its changes and gradations, to its most pregnant and most fully developed character. These systems, therefore, are exclusively *ontological*.

Secondly, the English and Scottish writers generally interdict the ontological branch of philosophy, as lying beyond the reach of our faculties. Intellectual science with them is confined, for the most part, to psychology, that is, to the analysis and classification of our mental phenomena. Whatever the universal testimony of the human faculties attests, that they accept as being true "*quoad nos*," and on this principle they refute the pretensions of scepticism; but they do not admit the possibility of attaining to the mysteries of absolute existence, or of expounding what, independently of our own perceptions, is the essential constitution of anything whatever. Now, Cousin regards these two opinions as extremes, both of which it is necessary to avoid. In place of commencing, as the Germans do, with ontology, he affirms that the psychological method is the only true one; that we can only properly begin by an analysis of the *facts* of our conscious existence; but, instead of bounding himself by the limits of psychology, he affirms the possibility of finding a solid passage from the subjective world to the objective—from phenomena to real existence. Since reason is not *personal* in its nature, but re-

ceives truth spontaneously, by direct and immediate apperception, he considers that we may, by the medium of this faculty, attain at once to the knowledge of essential and absolute existence.¹

Existence appears to us under three different forms. First of all, we are conscious of our own personal and voluntary energy; this we are led by reason to attribute to an essential and ever abiding existence, which we term self, or *the me*. Again, reason in like manner instructs us, whenever we are conscious of some outward influence exerted upon us through the medium of sensation, to attribute this influence to real and essential causes, the aggregate of which we term *nature*. But both self and nature are finite; they cannot, therefore, be self-existent or absolute, and must consequently have proceeded from another source, which bears the attributes of self-existence, infinity, eternity. Here, then, reason leads us to the absolute essence from which all things proceed, by which all things are sustained, in which all things subsist; and that essence is God.

According to this view, it is evident that God comprehends the universe in himself, and that all finite existence is but the emanation from his infinite existence. Still Cousin does not view Deity by any means in the pantheistic light, which was advocated by Spinoza and the Eleatics. "The God of consciousness (we quote his own words) is not an

¹ Vol. ii. p. 15.

abstract God, a solitary sovereign, banished beyond creation upon the throne of a silent eternity and an absolute existence, which resembles existence in no respect whatever ; he is a God at once true and real, at once substance and cause, always substance and always cause ; being substance only inasmuch as he is cause, and being cause only inasmuch as he is substance ; that is to say, being *absolute* cause, one and many, eternity and time, essence and life, end and middle, at the summit of existence and at its base, infinite and finite together ; in a word, a Trinity, being at the same time God, Nature, and Humanity.”¹

Cousin's view of the Divine nature is confessedly somewhat recondite and indistinct. While on the one hand he altogether repudiates the charge of pantheism, yet on the other hand it is difficult to say how his opinions, as above described, can be altogether vindicated from it. Time, perhaps, will show how far he has grasped, or how far misconceived, the whole subject. There is one point, however, upon which Cousin has expressed himself with great clearness and precision, and that is the essential comprehensibility of the Absolute by the human mind. This is, in fact, a principal feature in his philosophy. He considers that the establishment of the Absolute as a fundamental notion, and a constitutive principle of the human intelligence, is his chief merit as a philosopher, and upon this he grounds the peculiar claims of his modern system of eclecticism.

¹ Vol. ii. p. 17.

Now, of all questions which philosophy proposes for our investigation, there is probably not one so difficult to sound to its depths, not one on which the greatest thinkers have so much differed, as upon this. Sir William Hamilton has reduced the philosophical hypotheses, which have obtained respecting our knowledge of the absolute or unconditioned, to four distinct heads:—1. The Absolute is altogether inconceivable, every notion we have of it being simply a *negation* of that which characterises finite and conditioned existence. This opinion he holds himself in common with the English and Scottish school of modern times. 2. The Absolute, though not an object of real knowledge, yet exists subjectively within our consciousness as a regulative principle. Kant held this opinion: he believed that pure reason necessarily gives rise to the *notion* of the infinite and unconditioned, which notion we view under the threefold type of the soul, the universe, and the Deity; but he did not admit the objective reality of these conceptions. He regarded them merely as personifications of our own subjective laws or processes. 3. The Absolute cannot be comprehended in consciousness and reflection; but it can be gazed upon by a higher faculty, that of intellectual intuition. This is the well-known doctrine upon which Schelling has erected his system of philosophy. 4. The Absolute can be grasped by reason, and brought within the compass of our real consciousness. Such is the theory of Cousin himself.

Now, here we have three minds standing severally at the head of the respective philosophies of Britain, France, and Germany, assuming each a different hypothesis on this subject ; while Kant, the Aristotle of the modern world, assumes a fourth. Under such circumstances he must be a bold thinker, who ventures to pronounce confidently upon the truth or error of any one of these opinions. Few, perhaps, in our own country would be inclined to side either with Kant or Schelling ; the great point of dispute is most likely to be between Sir W. Hamilton and M. Cousin ; that is to say, whether the infinite, the absolute, the unconditioned, be really cognisable by the human reason, or whether it be not ; whether our notion of it be positive, or whether it be only negative. And here we freely confess that we are not yet prepared to combat, step by step, the weighty arguments by which the Scottish metaphysician seeks to establish the negative character of this great fundamental conception ; neither, on the other hand, are we prepared to admit his inference. We cannot divest our minds of the belief, that there is something *positive* in the glance which the human soul casts upon the world of eternity and infinity. Whether we rise to the contemplation of the Absolute through the medium of the true, the beautiful, or the good, we cannot imagine that our highest conceptions of these terminate in darkness, in a total negation of all knowledge. So far from this, there seem to be flashes of light, ineffable it may be, but still real, which envelope the soul in a lustre all

divine, when it catches glimpses of *infinite* truth, *infinite* beauty, and *infinite* excellence. The mind, instead of plunging into a total eclipse of all intellection, when it rises to this elevation, seems rather to be dazzled by a too great effulgence ; yet still the light is real light, although, to any but the strongest vision, the effect may be to *blind* rather than to illumine. It is not by negations that men are governed ; but it is before the idea of eternity and infinity that our fiercest humanity is softened and subdued. Until we are driven from this position by an irresistible evidence, we must still regard the notion of the infinite, the absolute, the eternal, as forming one of our fundamental notions ; and one which opens to us the highest field, both for our present meditation and our future prospects.

Before we conclude this sketch of Cousin's philosophy, we must advert to his merits as a historian. In doing this, we pass over the labours he has undertaken, as a translator and an editor, although, perhaps, he will not owe the least portion of his fame, *eventually*, to the admirable manner in which he has introduced the modern thinker into the profundities of Plato, and many other regions of philosophy, hitherto but imperfectly explored. A better foundation for modern eclecticism could not be laid, than that which such an exposition of the thoughts of great minds affords. In addition to this, however, the most attractive, perhaps, of our author's own writings, are his Lectures on the History of Philosophy. Many of the sentiments, it is true,

are drawn from German sources ; but still, they are so thoroughly individualised, and portrayed with so much force and perspicuity, that we hardly know which most to admire, the profound thinking by which they were first conceived, or the clearness and beauty by which they are here embellished. To comprehend the history of philosophy aright, Cousin affirms that we must have a distinct knowledge of the constituent elements of the human reason. Now, observation shows us, that these elements are three : the infinite, the finite, and the relation subsisting between them. These three notions, accordingly, must have been the foundations of philosophy in every age ; and in whatever manner they naturally develop themselves in the mind of humanity, such must have been the course of philosophy, historically speaking, from the earliest period.¹

In the individual reason, the first idea that occupies the mind, is that of the *infinite* ; gradually this is lost sight of, to make way for the knowledge of finite objects ; and, lastly, the two are united, and viewed in their mutual dependency upon each other. Just such has been the development of reason, in the whole course of humanity. The early oriental philosophy was grounded upon the idea of the infinite and absolute substance ; the Greek philosophy, culminating in Aristotle, was the philosophy of the finite ; and, lastly, the modern philosophy has developed the relation of the finite to the in-

¹ Vol. i. p. 56.

finite, and is thus destined to complete the whole cycle of human thought. These three eras, in fact, have been severally characterised by the existence of certain grand ideas, which, though seen in their pure and abstract form in philosophy, yet have virtually pervaded the whole religious and political existence of mankind. Thus, in religion, the first era gave rise to Pantheism, the second, to Polytheism, the third, to Theism; whilst, in politics, the first was the age of monarchy, the second, of democracy, the last, of mixed government.¹

It is not to be imagined, however, that these three eras of the world were each *exclusively* occupied with the fundamental conception in its various developments, upon which its grand peculiarities were founded. All the elements of reason must have really existed in every period; and although each has had its time of predominant influence, yet every age of mankind has exhibited, in a subordinate degree, different systems of philosophy; according as different minds have been led, more or less, to the contemplation of God, of nature, or of humanity. Hence, we find, as we gaze down the stream of history, the constant reproduction of the four philosophical tendencies, which we have indicated by the terms sensationalism, idealism, scepticism, and mysticism; and upon these four points, accordingly, the whole history of philosophy must turn. Each of the four systems is based upon a

¹ Vol. i. p. 125, *et seq.*

true idea, and has its own peculiar mission to perform in the development of human reason ; but each is involved in error, arising from its partial and exclusive view of the elements of which that reason consists. Their error, therefore, is the error of deficiency ; they are each true in what they teach, and each false in what they reject. In order to obtain the whole truth, they must be all united ; the doctrines which are mutually contradictory will then be exploded, and those which are able to stand side by side, will be retained.¹

This, then, is precisely the aim of modern eclecticism ; it is the summing up of the positive and negative results of all other systems, and the complete separation of that which is valid truth, in them all, from that admixture of error in which it was before involved. Such is the purpose (one truly worthy of a great mind) with which Cousin has devoted himself to the study of history ; and although we might be more gratified had he written systematic works upon philosophy, yet there can be little doubt, but that in following his present course, he is laying a far more solid foundation for the future stability and glory of the school which he has founded. In fine, as a popular expositor of philosophy, we doubt whether Cousin has anything approaching a rival in the present age. There may be, in Germany, more profound thinking, and more power in the purely abstract faculties, but we know

¹ Vol. i. p. 144, *et seq.*

of no philosopher of modern times, who unites to great originality of thought, so extraordinary a power of conveying his ideas in the most clear and eloquent language. The German thinkers, from their want of perspicuity, write almost exclusively for Germans; and, even of them, only for a small portion; but the philosophy of Cousin, although comprehending some of the most recondite points of the German metaphysics, yet has already found its way throughout Europe and America.

That this should be the case, we cannot but sincerely rejoice. Although, it is true, we could not subscribe to the system as a whole, yet we know of none which, diving deep into the interior of the human consciousness, comes forth at length with so little admixture of mere hypothesis, and so large a development of truth. Much as some might be startled at the idealism manifested in his analysis of *sensation*, we doubt whether any other ontological theory of the natural world has been propounded, so little involved in contradiction, and so thoroughly capable of explaining all the facts of the case. Metaphysics and natural philosophy, it appears to us, are both tending to a dynamical system of the universe, similar to that, of which the mighty mind of Leibnitz caught the distant glimpse.

In the analysis of *reason*, again, we can almost entirely coincide. The development of its constituent elements—the exposition of its spontaneous and reflective movements—the vindication of its authority—all present to us philosophical doctrines

of the greatest value ; all resting, moreover, upon the foundation of psychological *facts*, as evidence of their truth. We do not deny that these doctrines may yet require to be modified and perfected ; but still there are pregnant germs of truth in them, as they now stand upon the pages before us. To the analysis of the *will*, there may be some objection, owing to its complete isolation from the reason ; but even here, too, there are the elements of much truth, which only need a little more development, to place the philosophy of our voluntary activity upon a firm and intelligible basis.

There is one part, however, of the system now before us, which we must distinctly except from the eulogy we have pronounced upon the rest, and that is the part in which our author carries the results of his philosophy into the region of theological truth. There are two points in particular, which touch very closely upon the ordinary sentiments of the Christian world, and which open the door for an almost boundless advocacy of religious scepticism. These are, first, the notion he has given of Deity itself ; and, secondly, that which he has given of inspiration.

With regard to his notion of Deity, we have already shown how closely this verges upon the principle of Pantheism. Even if we admit that it is *not* a doctrine, like that of Spinoza, which identifies God with the abstract idea of substance ; or even like that of Hegel, which regards Deity as synonymous with the absolute law and process of the uni-

verse ; if we admit, in fact, that the Deity of Cousin possesses a conscious personality, yet still it is one which contains in itself the finite personality and consciousness of every subordinate mind. God is the ocean—we are but the waves ; the ocean may be one individuality, and each wave another ; but still they are *essentially* one and the same. We see not how Cousin's Theism can possibly be consistent with any idea of moral evil ; neither do we see how, starting from such a dogma, he can ever vindicate and uphold his own theory of human liberty. On such Theistic principles, all sin must be simply *defect*, and all defect must be absolutely fatuitous.¹

But the most dangerous door into religious scepticism, is the use which Cousin makes of the spontaneity of the human reason, in order to explain the phenomena of inspiration. Reflection alone is considered to be the source of error ; while that pure apperception, that instinctive development of thought, which results from spontaneity, is absolutely infallible. Now this spontaneity, it is said, is the foundation of religion. Those who were termed seers, prophets, inspired teachers, of ancient times, were simply men who resigned themselves largely to their intellectual instincts, and thus gazed upon truth in its pure and perfect form. They did not reason, they did not search, they did not reflect

¹ This part of Cousin's philosophy has excited a very lively opposition from various quarters. In France it has been contested by Bautain, in his "Psychologie Expérimentale," Disc. Prélim. ; and by M. Maret, in his "Essai sur le Panthéisme," chap. i.

deeply and patiently, they made no pretension to philosophy ; but they received truth spontaneously, as it flowed in upon them from heaven. Now, in one sense, all this may be true ; but, according to Cousin, this immediate reception of Divine light was nothing more than the *natural* play of the spontaneous reason ; nothing more than what has existed, to a greater or less degree, in every man of great genius ; nothing more than what may now exist in any mind which resigns itself to its own unreflective apperceptions. This being the case, revelation, in the ordinary sense, loses all its peculiar value ; every man may be a prophet ; every mind has within it the same authority to decide upon truth, as those minds had who dictated the Bible ; we have only to sit and listen to the still small voice within, to enjoy a daily revelation, which bears upon it all the marks of absolute infallibility.

This doctrine, of course, may seem very plausible and very flattering ; nay, it may arraign some evidence, and boast the explanation of many facts ; but, assuredly, it can only be erected and established upon the ruins of all the fundamental evidences of Christianity. When the advocates of this natural spontaneous inspiration will come forth from their recesses of thought, and deliver prophecies as clear as those of the Hebrew seer—when they shall mould the elements of nature to their will—when they shall speak with the sublime authority of Jesus of Nazareth, and with the same infinite ease rising beyond all the influence of time, place, and circum-

stances, explain the past, and unfold the future—when they die for the truth they utter, and rise again, as witnesses to its divinity—then we may begin to place them on the elevation which they so thoughtlessly claim ; but, until they either prove these *facts* to be delusions, or give their parallel in themselves, the world may well laugh at their ambition, and trample their spurious inspiration beneath its feet.

Much as we admire Cousin, while he keeps within his proper limits, and much as we are disposed to maintain the truth of his philosophy, in most of its principal features, we cannot but repudiate, with all our energy, his attempt to intrude upon the sacred province of the Christian revelation. If he will stand up as a theologian, and fight the battle upon its proper grounds, let him do so, and there are plenty to take up the gauntlet which he throws down ; but it is not the part, which his own philosophy would dictate, to raise a new theory of revelation to supersede all the rest, without considering the facts and the evidences which the Christian revelation can display.

In the foregoing pages, we have seen the process by which the principles of the ideological school have been gradually overthrown, and those of eclecticism established. M. Laromiguière began by secretly undermining the bulwarks of sensationalism ;

M. Royer-Collard made the first open breach in the wall; and M. Cousin has spent his life in rearing the edifice of a new philosophy. Our next duty is, to exhibit the effects which this philosophy has produced in France, and to describe the *school*, to which it has given rise. To do this, will be a work of but little difficulty. The school itself is so recent, that, as yet, it has had no time to assume many variations; and, although it numbers several thinkers of great independence among its advocates, yet their opinions do not depart so widely from those of the founder, as to require any lengthened explanation.

By far the most celebrated of Cousin's pupils and supporters was M. Theodore Jouffroy. This popular and eloquent writer was born in the year 1796, and having studied philosophy in the faculty of literature, under the direction of Cousin, was appointed soon after Professor of Moral Philosophy in the same institution,—a post which he retained until his death. M. Jouffroy first became known to the public at large through the medium of a translation of Dugald Stewart's "Moral Philosophy." To this translation he prefixed an essay or preface, in which he vindicates the study of intellectual science against the attacks of those who would banish all, except natural philosophy, out of the domain of human investigation. The preface, as a whole, shows that the author has deeply imbibed the principles and the spirit of the Scottish metaphysicians, whilst, at the same time, he rises occasionally to those more expansive views of philoso-

phical truth, which were inculcated in the lectures of his illustrious predecessor.

Nothing can exceed the clearness, and even the beauty, with which he establishes in this little production the fundamental principles of intellectual philosophy. As all science must be built upon *facts*, he first inquires, whether there be not an order of facts peculiar to themselves, and valid in their nature, upon which mental philosophy, as a branch of inductive science, can be erected? This leads to a very lucid exhibition of the contrast which exists between the external facts of sensible observation, and the internal facts of consciousness; in which he shows, that no fact cognisable by the senses could possibly be arrived at by a direct consciousness, and that no fact of consciousness could ever be known through the senses. He concludes, therefore, that two orders of facts exist, perfectly unique in their character and perfectly distinct from each other.¹ This point once established, he proceeds to prove, that the facts of consciousness can be accurately observed, and that their laws can be determined with the same precision as the laws of the material world. Next, with regard to the *communication* of the facts of consciousness to others, he proceeds to show, that although sensible evidence cannot be given, as is the case in natural phi-

¹ M. Jouffroy has overlooked the point in which the *morale* and the *physique* virtually unite, that of muscular motion. This exception must always be taken against the absolute distinction here made, between the facts of observation and those of consciousness.

losophy, yet, that the same end is attained by appealing to what passes within the consciousness of our fellow-creatures, who, in all important points, are able to verify the truth of our descriptions by their own personal experience. That nothing may be wanting to establish his point, he goes on to prove, that physiologists themselves, even while they deny a separate order of spiritual facts, virtually proceed upon them in all their own investigations ; —natural science being as much grounded upon abstract and *philosophical* principles, as any other. In this manner he successfully deduces the conclusions, that there *are* valid facts on which to build a science of psychology ; that these facts can be accurately determined ; —that they can be communicated by one mind to another ; and, that every branch of human research virtually admits them. *

The great requirement for the advancement of psychological science is, that theories should be renounced, that hasty inductions should be given up, and that we should apply ourselves to the colligation of all the facts of consciousness, and to their proper classification, with the same diligence that has been expended upon natural philosophy. Many problems, respecting the nature of the human mind, are, at present, confessedly enveloped in darkness and obscurity. “Whence, then,” says our author, “is the light to come? Where are we to seek for it? In a more profound observation,” he replies, “of the *phenomena of human nature*, and especially in the study, which has been greatly neglected and which

is yet in the background, of the facts of consciousness." Such, in brief, is the clear and common-sense view which our author has taken of the proper method of philosophical research.¹

The next source to which we must go, in order to estimate the philosophical character of M. Jouffroy, is a collection of articles upon a variety of topics, entitled "*Mélanges Philosophiques*." These were originally contributions to a philosophical journal, termed "*The Globe*," but have since been published by the author in a distinct form. In these articles, we see the zealous pupil and successor of Cousin, the genuine modern eclectic, touching, more or less, upon all points within the range of intellectual philosophy, and pouring light derived from all directions upon them. We feel ourselves in company with a master mind, one who does not servilely follow in the track pointed out by others, but, yet, who knows how to appreciate the labours of all true-hearted thinkers, and to make their results tell upon the elucidation of his own system.

According to the views here advanced, man is to be regarded and studied in a twofold point of view; inasmuch, as he comprehends in himself two separate elements—*the thing* on the one hand, *the person* on the other. The former is human nature as subjected to its necessary laws and impulses; the other is human nature as the possessor of that ex-

¹ This preface is translated, and published in Clark's "*Student's Cabinet Library*," together with many other of Jouffroy's *Miscellanies*.

traordinary *personal* power, by which our natural capacities are directed, and our whole existence moulded to the intelligent accomplishment of its destiny. These two elements constitute in us two distinct modes of life,—the impersonal life, and the personal; and it forms one of the chief features in the system before us, that every faculty we possess is regarded as being developed, either, on the one hand, according to the necessary laws of human nature; or, on the other hand, under the superintendence and direction of our personal power. With regard to the faculties themselves, Jouffroy has reduced them to the following heads:—First, *the personal faculty*, or the supreme power of taking possession of ourselves and of our capacities, and of controlling them; this faculty is known by the name of liberty or will, which, however, designates it but imperfectly. Secondly, *the primitive inclinations* of our nature, or that aggregate of instincts or tendencies which impel us towards certain ends and in certain directions prior to all experience, and which at once suggest to reason the destiny of our being, and animate our activity to pursue it. Thirdly, *the locomotive faculty*, or that energy by which we move the locomotive nerves, and produce all the voluntary bodily movements. Fourthly, *the expressive faculty*, or the power of representing, by external signs, that which takes place within us, and of thus holding communication with our fellow men. Fifthly, *sensibility*, or the capacity of being agreeably or disagreeably affected by all external or

internal causes, and of re-acting in relation to them by movements of love or hatred, of desire or aversion, which are the principle of passion. Sixthly, *the intellectual faculties*. This term comprises many distinct powers, which can be enumerated and described only in a treatise on intelligence. This may suffice to give what is peculiar to Jouffroy's system; in most other respects he has followed in the footsteps of his master.¹

M. Jouffroy, however, is by profession a *moralist*, and, consequently, his chief duty is to explain and illustrate this part of our constitution. With many of the lectures delivered by him, in this capacity, he has favoured us; and we have learned to appreciate and admire the profound, yet eloquent criticism with which he has analysed all the principal moral systems of our own and of other countries. Without dwelling, however, upon his character as a *critic*, we must glance for a moment at the peculiarities which exist in his own views of ethical philosophy.²

According to Jouffroy, the primary question in ethics is, "Whether there be such a thing as good, and such a thing as evil?" The whole life of mankind, he contends, furnishes one long and continued affirmative to this question, inasmuch as men are

¹ *Mélanges Philosophiques*, art. "Des Facultés de l'Ame Humaine," p. 263.

² Jouffroy's lectures on moral philosophy have been translated in America, and published as part of a series of works, entitled "Specimens of Foreign Literature," by George Ripley of Boston, United States.

continually engaged in deliberating, choosing, and deciding between them. Allowing, then, that good and evil exist, the next point is, to determine *on what ground* one thing is to be considered preferable to another. Here our author goes into an elaborate discussion, to show that we must regard everything as good on the one hand, or evil on the other, *in proportion as it serves to aid or to prevent the fulfilment of our destiny*. The great problem of human destiny, then, lies at the foundation of all morality; and it is according to the bearing which every action has upon this, that we must determine its ethical quality. To pronounce *a priori* concerning actions, whether they are good or bad, is impossible. This entirely depends, first, upon the Being to which they apply; and next, upon the influence they may have on the destiny for which that being was created. Good, in the case of any particular being, is simply the fulfilment of *its own specific destiny*; and good *in itself* is the accomplishment of the destiny of all beings; *i. e.*, the existence of perfect order and harmony in the universe, where everything proceeds uninterruptedly to its end. In this world we find that there are perpetual interruptions in the fulfilment of our destiny. This constitutes *moral evil*; and it is only when these obstacles shall be all removed, when all intelligent beings gaze upon the great end of their creation, and proceed without lingering to the realisation of it, that evil will be subdued, and the reign of moral perfection commence. For this

realisation, however, we must look beyond the present to a future, and that a sinless world.

For the further development, however, of these views, we must refer the reader to Jouffroy's lectures, or, for a briefer sketch of them, to an article on "Good and Evil," which will be found among his "*Mélanges Philosophiques*." As a *metaphysician*, Jouffroy will, probably, ever rank considerably below Cousin, both in depth and originality; since, in fact, he hardly went beyond the psychological stand-point of the Edinburgh school; but as a moralist, he leads the way in the eclectic school, without any appearance of a rival. We believe, that there is no writer of the present day who has grappled with the great problems of moral science, so manfully and successfully—and who has succeeded in throwing so much fresh light upon a subject which has commanded the energies of the greatest minds.

In Cousin and Jouffroy we have at once the two first, and the two greatest advocates of modern eclecticism in France.¹ The doctrines, however, which these have been inculcating in the Normal School at Paris, during the last twenty years and more, have been warmly received by many others;

¹ Jouffroy's views on eclecticism, may be seen in his *Mélanges Phil.* articles, "Comment les Dogmes finissent," "De la Sorbonne et des Philosophes," and "Réflexions sur la Philosophie de l'Histoire." The most elegant critique upon the genius and philosophy of Jouffroy with which I am acquainted, is that of M. Sainte-Beuve, in his admirable "*Portraits et Critiques Littéraires*," vol. i. of the Second Series.

and not a few have gone forth from their instructions to disseminate the same principles throughout the country. M. Philippe Damiron may be regarded as the third in order of time and eminence, to whom eclecticism owes its present position among the philosophies of Europe. Brought up under the tuition of Cousin, he soon proved himself a worthy pupil of such a master, and has been since rewarded with the Professorship of Philosophy, at the Normal School of Paris, and the College of Louis the Great. M. Damiron has published a course both of mental and moral philosophy, which holds a somewhat distinguished place among the metaphysical productions of the day.¹ The work, however, by which he is best known, and to which I beg now to acknowledge my own obligations, is entitled, "*Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France au Dix-neuvième Siècle.*" This work, which has gone through many editions, and found its way into many countries, is almost indispensable to the study of the history of modern philosophy in France, as it gives perhaps the only complete account of the progress of metaphysics in that country, from the period of the Revolution down to the period of its publication.²

The views of M. Damiron are formed closely

¹ "*Cours de Philosophie,*" 4 vols. 8vo.

² This "*Essai*" was published first in 1827. The last edition appeared in 1835, with copious additions on the more recent authors. A still more elaborate work of his pen has lately appeared, entitled "*Essai sur l'Histoire de la Phil. en France, au xvii^e Siècle.*" Two thick vols. 8vo, 1846.

after the model of the school from which he came ; and in him, accordingly, eclecticism has found a warm, and, we may add, an able advocate. To detail his philosophical opinions would only be to tread over again the same ground which we have already traversed ; and we shall content ourselves, therefore, with giving to our readers the spirited remarks upon *eclecticism*, with which he closes the volume above mentioned, and which we regard as being, upon the whole, a fair estimate of the real worth and excellence of the system. “ It would not be impossible,” remarks our author, “ in strictness, to make a whole philosophy without the aid of eclecticism. But such a philosophy would be a monstrosity ; and for the work, there would be requisite a genius which, alone and by itself, without aid or co-operation, could equal in the best accomplishments the combined genius of the greatest philosophers ; those who, in fact, were great only through their preceptors, and through history. The human mind, however, cannot count upon such a singular phenomenon ; and eclecticism is much rather its proper production, because, after all, it is, in one view of the case, only the natural procedure of humanity, namely, labour by concert and association. Eclecticism, in fact, is philosophy by association ; the philosophy which, by means of criticism and history, enriches itself with all the legitimate acquisitions that belong to the past. And this philosophy is of so much the greater worth, because it is more in communion with anterior philosophies,

because it participates in a greater number of doctrines, and because it has more out of which to choose, and knows better how to exercise its choice. * * * * I called eclecticism philosophy by association: cannot I call it also philosophy without exclusion—a sort of philanthropy applied to the true ideas of all times and all countries? The larger it is in its admissions, so long as it be discreet, and the more it embraces, so long as it does so wisely, so much the more legitimate and pure it is—so much the more accomplished.

“It would be difficult to affirm, that eclecticism will never change, whether it be in relation to its criterion (which is less probable) or to its erudition, which latter will almost infallibly happen; for already, since it has been in the world, it has undergone many modifications, both in the *rule* and in the *manner* of its choice. At present it is *spiritual*; spiritual from proceeding upon the data of psychology. This tendency I believe to be good, and consequently to be durable; but, nevertheless, I believe, it may take some day another. In the same manner, it now moves in a sphere of erudition without doubt very extensive; but how can we say that it will not proceed, and extend itself beyond it, since it has yet altogether a new world, that of the East, hitherto little known, to pervade and to master? There is, then, a chance that in process of time it may become varied and modified.

“But what will be the consequence? Clearly, that it will be amended, fortified, perfected; not

that it will come to an end. It will not come to an end, at least, until it is fully completed ; and then it will be able to be said, that the humanity of the present has all the knowledge of the past ; that it has what is better and more true, the sum of all science, and that nothing therein is deficient. Until then, eclecticism, whether we know it or not, will be, and will continue to be, the necessary procedure of every spirit in progress.

“ As we see, and as I have said, eclecticism is not for philosophy a definitive state ; it is not an end, it is a means ; but this means is yet for a long futurity, and in our days, more than ever, of indispensable application. Humanity did not commence and will not finish with eclecticism ; but it has lived, and will live and develop itself by eclecticism, which is to the world of ideas that which association is to the world of persons ; or which is (to speak more accurately) but one form of association itself. More than ever do I find this conviction strengthened, the more I penetrate, though with many difficulties, yet with much happiness, onwards into the history of philosophy.” Such is M. Damiron’s estimate of the philosophical school, to which he feels it his honour and happiness to belong. We have been the more anxious to present our readers with this extract, because it gives so decided an answer to the frequent cry which has been raised against the eclectic system, as though it undertook to develop a whole body of philosophical truth, from the mere juxtaposition of all the conflicting opinions of the

present or of former days. Eclecticism, in Cousin's sense, is not a mere syncretism; it contains a definite philosophical method, and would develop truth even were there no other systems to compare with it. But convinced that all earnest thinkers have had some true ideas to work upon, it sets itself manfully to determine what they are; and strives to add the testimony of humanity at large to its own investigations. Admitting, then, that the eclectic starts with a clear philosophical method, we know not how it is possible more firmly to strengthen its positions than to concentrate upon them the universal truth, that flows through all the philosophies which history or the present age present.

Cousin, Jouffroy, and Damiron, form the foremost rank among the abettors of eclecticism; but many names might yet be mentioned in the list of metaphysical writers, which show that there is a "corps de réserve," to carry on the work as they may be removed from the scene of action. The extraordinary development of a spiritual philosophy under the name of eclecticism, within recent times, presents to us a phenomenon, which is well worth our most earnest attention. From the fall of the French republic the age of grossness and materialism began to decline. A new tone of thinking gradually sprang up, which, while it rejected the excesses of democracy, yet had tasted too much of the principles of national liberty, to admit for a moment the idea of any return to the old régime. This party, which gathered together after the restoration, under the

title of *liberalism*, numbered many ardent and philosophical minds, who looked forward to some bright futurity, in which a deep philosophy and a rational faith should spread their benign influence throughout society at large.

The eloquent lectures of Cousin matured these views, and stimulated these hopes ; and when the hand of tyranny silenced both his own voice and that of his no less eloquent pupil, and drove them from the halls of public instruction, their deep murmurs only found a readier ear among the more enlightened of the age, as they rolled upwards upon society from the retirement to which persecution had banished them.

“The Globe,” which was commenced in Sept. 1824, became the rallying point around which these master spirits of the age were gathered together. Its first editors were MM. Dubois and Leroux ; but M. Jouffroy may be regarded as the presiding genius of its earlier efforts. While these philosophic minds found here an organ for their murmurs and their hopes, there were others of no inconsiderable influence who indirectly gave it their support. M. Cousin saw in it the fruits of his own otherwise ill rewarded labours. M. Guizot could not but favour a journal in which his own enlightened views upon European civilisation were maintained and expounded ; M. de Broglie, and others of like spirit, secretly rejoiced in the broad and liberal principles which were there brought before the public. At the same time, some of the higher order of minds, who

had gained new views of society in the school of St Simon, took part in the movement; so that, in fact, the way was prepared for the brief, but brilliant, revolution of 1830, which repelled the base attempts of a restored monarchy to lay its hand upon the liberties of the nation.

This point once achieved, and a period of repose having succeeded, the genius of philosophy began to rouse up its energies to fresh action. From the accession of Louis Philippe to the present hour, the French press has been sending forth a metaphysical literature, which in learning and eloquence will bear a comparison with any former period of philosophical activity. The fruits of it, as seen in the theological and mystical schools, we have already noticed; it remains for us only to notice it more especially in connexion with the spirit of modern *eclecticism*.

The labours of eclecticism, during the last fifteen or twenty years, may be distributed into three classes;—viz. translations or editions, histories, and original philosophical works. In rendering an account of these labours, we cannot attempt to give any thing like a complete list of all the works of a school which has been so unusually productive; we shall merely point out, therefore, some of the principal movements of its more recent activity.

1. With regard to the labours of the editor and translator, it will be recollected that Cousin himself, the head of the school, has nobly led the way in his translation of Plato, and his beautiful editions both of Proclus and Descartes; M. Jouffroy and others

have translated the works of Reid and Stewart ; and M. Peisse, in addition to "Stewart's Elements," has given to the French public the collected fragments of Sir W. Hamilton. The Charpentier editions of the earlier movements of modern philosophy have all appeared under the direction of the eclectic school. M. Saisset, professor at the normal school, has furnished us with an admirable translation of Spinoza. M. Jules Simon, also of the normal school, has performed the same office for Descartes, so far at least as his philosophical writings are concerned ; and M. Jacques, professor at the Royal College of Versailles, has edited Leibnitz's and Clarke's philosophical writings in the same form.

With regard to the German philosophy, it may be said now to exist almost complete in the French language. Through the industry of M. J. Tissot, professor at Dijon, and M. Jules Barni, professor at the College of Charlemagne, together with MM. Melin and Trullard, the great works of the immortal Kant are now before the French public in their most intelligible form. M. Paul Grimblot has completed the translation of the two main productions of Fichte and Schelling, the "Wissenschaftslehre" of the one, and "Transcendentaler Idealismus" of the other. Several of their other works have also appeared in able translations by M. Francisque Bouillier, of Lyons, by M. C. Husson, by M. Nicolas, professor at Montauban, (author of a defence of Eclecticism against the attacks of Pierre Leroux), and by several other labourers in the same cause. Of the works

of Hegel, the lectures on *Æsthetics* have already appeared, under the care of M. Bénard of Rouen ; while some of his other writings, as well as the letters of Jacobi upon Spinoza, are we believe now in progress. When we add that Vico's "*Scienza Nuova*," and the philosophical letters of Galluppi, have appeared in recent translations, and that the grand productions, in fact, of every nation, are appropriated sooner or later to the aid of eclecticism, we may reasonably look forward to the advantage of possessing, ere long, the philosophical thinking of the world, in the most lucid and precise of all the languages of mankind.

2. The history of philosophy is a subject to which eclecticism naturally directs its best energies. Nurtured as it is in extensive erudition, it ever seeks to develop the progress of human knowledge, and get as near as possible to the catholic thinking of mankind. M. Cousin has here also led the way at once by his lectures, and by the second series of his philosophical fragments. Since his example has been before the world, many are the works illustrative both of ancient and modern philosophy, which have emanated from the French press. The logic of Aristotle is now translated, and has been copiously illustrated in a *mémoire* presented to the "*Académie des Sciences*" by M. Barthélemy St Hilaire. The schools of Megara, of Elis, and of Eretria, have found an historian in M. Mallet, professor at the College of St Louis ; and the philosophical school of Alexandria, with its wondrous

mixture of western thought and oriental mysticism, has excited especial attention amongst the eclectic historians. M. B. St Hilaire, and M. Simon, have each brought their varied and extensive erudition to bear upon the illustration of this remarkable page in the history of the human mind.

The history of Cartesianism has not unnaturally claimed a considerable share of attention from those who wish to vindicate for France the honour of an original and native philosophy.¹ The last work of M. Damiron, entitled "Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France, au 17^{me} siècle," gives a very full and clear description both of Descartes himself, and of the school which he originated; and the mémoire of M. Demoulin, entitled "Cartesianism," which gained the prize at the French Institute, may be regarded as one of the most complete expositions of the Cartesian spirit and doctrine which have yet appeared. Other works on the same subject have been published, the principal of which have been already noticed in our former remarks upon the Cartesian school of the seventeenth century.

The philosophy of Germany, being in fact the great repository of spiritualism in human thought, has confessedly exerted a vast and almost unappreciable influence upon the modern schools of France. Cousin himself confesses that it was under this influence that his own powers were at once awakened, and directed to the higher problems of fundamental

¹ The still earlier philosophy of France, that of the scholastic age, is portrayed in M. Rémusat's recent work on *Abélard*.

truth. About ten years since M. Barchou de Penhoen, an intelligent French writer of Portuguese extraction, published an "Histoire de la Philosophie Allemande depuis Leibnitz jusqu'à Hegel," in two vols. 8vo. This was the first attempt that was made to give a systematic and connected view of the German idealism in the French language. M. Ch. Renouvier, in his "Manuel de Philosophie Moderne," has recently undertaken the same task in a more brief, but equally intelligible form, and, in truth, evinces himself a decided leaning to the Hegelian method. In 1846, M. Abel Rémusat published his report on the mémoires presented to the Académie des Sciences, respecting the present state of intellectual philosophy in Germany; which he has introduced by a preface filled with the most masterly illustrations and criticisms upon the principal systems of that country. The prize mémoire by M. Willm is now in process of publication (the first of four volumes having just appeared), and promises, when completed, to be by far the most full and detailed exposition of the German philosophy, from Kant to Hegel, which has yet been sent forth from any other than the German press.¹

3. With regard to original works on philosophy, the eclectic school has already furnished a consider-

¹ We might have mentioned here the Life of Kant by M. Amand Saintes, and a History of the German Rationalism, by the same author; but he does not appear to pertain to the eclectic school. The same may be said of Dr Ott, author of the work before referred to on the philosophy of Hegel. This acute writer belongs to the historical school of M. Buchez.

able number, although it has not yet been long enough in existence to produce any great variety of opinion and research. Several of the professors in the different universities of France, have published a "Cours de Philosophie," (as, for example, M. Mazure of Poitiers); but these are most frequently adapted rather to instruct the student in the *elements* of intellectual science, than to develop any new or advanced views with regard to the great problems of philosophy. Some of the most important points, however, of the philosophy of Cousin, have been elaborated in separate works, among which we may mention, especially, those of M. Gruyer, entitled "Des Causes conditionnelles et productrices des Idées," and "Principes de Philosophie Physique," intended to give the basis of the metaphysics of nature. Of others, M. F. Bouillier has discussed the doctrine of the impersonal reason; M. Ed. Mercier, the relations between faith and science; while M. Ernest Bersot of Versailles, in a work entitled "Du Spiritualisme et de la Nature," has ventured upon those most difficult of all questions, which refer to the relations subsisting between creation and the Creator, both in their speculative and practical import.

There is one work, however, to which we are desirous of making especial reference, inasmuch as it sounds the first note of division within the camp of the eclectic philosophy, and that is an "Essai d'une Nouvelle Théorie sur les Idées fondamentales," by F. Perron. The author having given an historical sketch of the rise and progress of the modern spi-

ritual philosophy in France, enters into a searching critique of the principal doctrines of eclecticism, as professed by the school of Cousin. In this critique, he attempts to show that the relations which have been established between our fundamental ideas, with regard to their logical and chronological conditions, are perfectly arbitrary and unfounded; that the characters of necessity, of immutability, and of universality, by which they are said to be distinguished, cannot be claimed for them in any exclusive and peculiar sense; that their origin is no more *a priori*, than the origin of any thing is which we grasp by the understanding; that the attempt to account for their objective validity by the impersonality of reason, has signally failed; and, finally, that the nature of the categories has been altogether misunderstood.

Having concluded his critique, the author attempts to prove, that there is one, and only one cognitive faculty in man; that this cognitive faculty is adapted to grasp objective truth directly and immediately; that the properties of things which we perceive, are but the modes of their existence; that all our knowledge begins with these concrete perceptions; and that the categories are not forms of thought, nor pure ideas, nor principles of common sense, nor anything else other than the pure abstractions, or rather the highest generalisations which we form from individual existences. Having argued this theory respecting the notions of time and space, substance and phenomenon, cause and effect, the finite and the infinite, the good, the

beautiful, and the true, the author ends by giving a complete list of nine categories. We may ask respecting things around us—

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. If they are? | Category of Existence. |
| 2. What they are? | “ Essence. |
| 3. How they are? | “ Mode. |
| 4. By what? | “ Causality. |
| 5. Why? | “ End. |
| 6. Where? | “ Space. |
| 7. When? | “ Time. |
| 8. How many? | “ Number. |
| 9. In what relations? | “ Relation. |

These ideas, he shows, give us a complete view of all the different relations in which things can be viewed; that they are neither inadequate nor redundant; and that they express precisely the highest generalisations to which the human mind can arrive, with regard to every inquiry it institutes on the proper determination of existences at large.

The author has argued his points with considerable ingenuity, but, as it appears to our own mind, is far from sustaining them against the school he opposes. We are not sorry, however, to see these questions brought down upon the arena of contest; so long as they are regarded as fixed and unquestionable data, the progress of philosophy is only likely to be impeded; the opening of a new campaign, gives additional hope with regard to the progressive results of philosophy for the future.

The mature age of a philosophy generally gives rise to an Encyclopædia, which regards all philoso-

phical questions from its own peculiar point of view. The highest results of the eclectic school are now being embodied in the “*Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques*,”—perhaps the most complete attempt which has yet been made at a universal biography and critique of all philosophers and their systems. Above thirty of the first names which France can boast at the head of her metaphysical literature, appear as contributors to this noble undertaking—an undertaking which not only supplies a desideratum in their own literature, but which must prove of essential service to the progress of philosophy itself, as being the most careful historical analysis which has yet appeared of the catholic thinking of mankind.¹

SECT. II.—*Collateral Branches of the Eclectic Philosophy.*

In the former section we have attempted to trace the process by which the materialism that overran France at the commencement of the present century, was gradually undermined and supplanted by a more earnest and spiritual philosophy. Were we, however, here to close our sketch of the French eclecticism, although we may have tracked its actual progress up to the present time, yet we should be far from doing justice to many profound thinkers

¹ For an exposition of the philosophical principles which have guided the criticisms of this work, see Appendix, note G.

and excellent writers, who have aided in combating the doctrines of materialism, and clearing the way for these new and nobler principles. There are some authors in all countries who, without addressing themselves *immediately* to the solution of metaphysical or ethical problems, yet, by the whole cast and spirit of their writings, exert a great influence upon the philosophy of their age. There are others, moreover, metaphysicians by profession, whose erratic genius defies all classification, and disowns the limits of all schools, but who nevertheless obtain their share of influence in the world of thought. To pass these by, in giving a faithful history of philosophy, would be an inexcusable omission; and we shall attempt, therefore, to compress into a small compass a succinct account of the *collateral streams* which have aided in swelling the now deepening channel of the spiritual eclecticism of France.

I. And first, let us notice one or two writers who, in the *earlier portion* of the century, lent their aid to the first attacks which were made upon the reigning ideology. Foremost amongst these we should reckon Benjamin Constant, a mind imbued with many of the best qualities, both of the French and the German character, and free from most of the vices peculiar to each. The influence he possessed before and during his banishment by Napoleon, was rather of a personal character than exerted through the press; but on his return he became widely celebrated for his political writings, and finally for his remarkable theologico-philosophical

work, entitled, “ De la Religion considérée dans sa Source, ses Formes, et ses Développement.” In this, his last legacy to the world, he gave the most decisive proofs of his anti-sensational tendency ; and, with a brilliancy of wit and eloquence for which he was almost unrivalled, defended his more spiritual views against the attacks of materialism.

His great principle is, that the religious feeling in man is purely *instinctive*, that it arises neither from sensation, nor from a sense of fear, nor from physical organisation ; but from the mysterious and Divine constitution of the human soul. As Constant has written so little of a purely metaphysical nature, we cannot assign him a very prominent place in the history of speculative philosophy ; by his whole style of thinking, however, by his religious views, by his earnest feelings, as well as by his direct arguments, he contributed his share in dethroning materialism from its long-continued sway, and in abetting the first efforts of the eclectic school. In connexion with Benjamin Constant we must also mention *Madame de Staël*. It was in company with Constant, together with Villers, the first French expositor of Kantism, and Schlegel the elder, that that extraordinary woman learned to appreciate the profound and spiritual philosophy of Germany. A more admirable medium could hardly be imagined for adapting the lofty thoughts of Germany to the French mind, than was afforded by her warm and enthusiastic style. Had the intense researches of Fichte or Schelling been sent forth, just

in the form in which they flowed from the pens of the authors, to the French public in its own tongue, they would, in all probability, have been thrown aside in disgust, and left hardly an impression behind them. No sooner, however, were these thoughts divested of all technicality, no sooner were they stripped of their abstract form, and held up to view by the light of her ardent enthusiasm, than they penetrated into every mind, and, with the admiration which they at first excited, left behind a longing for better things. France learned first, from the pages of this its fair preceptress, that the philosophy of Germany was not a tissue of unintelligible mysticism; it learned, that behind a forbidding exterior there were deep and burning thoughts, which only needed a fitting channel, to shed their influence upon every branch of human knowledge. Although no *system* of philosophy was inculcated by her—none even explained, with any approach to logical accuracy—yet it was impossible not to feel, in the perusal of her writings, that there existed a philosophy, far nobler than the dreams of materialism; that there were sentiments and impulses in the human soul, which could never be brought down to the vibrations of a nerve, or the commotions of the brain. Mad. de Staël, though not herself a philosopher, did perhaps more for philosophy in France, than any writer of the same age. She seized upon the few prominent ideas which she had learned to love and to cherish, in her literary retreat at Coppet, and sent them forth, clothed with all the brightness of

her own enthusiastic spirit, to awake a response in the depths of every earnest and thoughtful mind. In doing this, she well performed her mission, and exerted an influence, to which the country, from which she lived an exile, owes a lasting debt of gratitude.

Another writer, of a class entirely different from those we have just mentioned, but who has also had an indirect influence upon the renovation of the French philosophy, is M. Degérando.¹ This somewhat celebrated author first appeared before the public in the year 1800, by the publication of a work, proposing to exemplify the relation between the signs of our thoughts and the art of thinking.² At that time M. Degérando, in common with all the other philosophers of the country, was a disciple of Condillac; but, although professedly belonging to the ideologists, yet he was far from adopting the extreme opinions, for which many of them became remarkable, manifesting even then a decided repug-

¹ M. Degérando was born at Lyons, A.D. 1772. When his native town was besieged by the republican army in 1793, he took arms in its defence, and with difficulty escaped into Italy, where he remained for three years. After his return to France he joined the Army of Italy; but owing to his rising literary reputation, was soon appointed to civil service. During the régime of Napoleon he was advanced from one post of dignity to another, and after the Restoration was appointed professor à la Faculté de Droit. In 1837 he was raised to the peerage, and in 1842 he died.

² This was a mémoire which he wrote for the "Classe des Sciences Morales et Politiques," and which received the prize, an honour of which he received the intelligence as he was reposing from the toils and dangers of the battle of Zurich. It consists of 4 vols. 8vo.

nance towards the materialistic tendency of the age. In 1802 M. Degérando gave in a *mémoire* to the Academy of Berlin, "*De la Génération des Connaissances Humaines*," which was honoured with the highest prize of distinction. The *mémoire* consisted, first of a historical view of the different theories which have obtained in different periods of the world, on the origin of our ideas ; and, secondly, of an analysis of the true elements of human knowledge. This treatise, which was published at Berlin in 1802, formed the basis of a much more complete and valuable work, entitled "*Histoire Comparée des Systèmes de Philosophie relativement aux Principes des Connaissances Humaines*," and which appeared in Paris in 1804. This work, although estimating all systems of philosophy from the ideological point of view, yet seemed to spread abroad a more popular knowledge, than had hitherto existed, of the world's great thinkers, and of the views and opinions which they had entertained. The author showed himself clearly to possess a liberal and enlightened mind—to be a sincere seeker after truth, and not to be fettered closely by the trammels of any system. Accordingly, as the spirit of the age began to change—as the reaction against the sensationalism of the Encyclopædic period began to show itself, M. Degérando was one of the first to move forward in the stream, and to welcome every fresh sign of real improvement. In 1822, he commenced a second edition of his *History of Philosophy*, revised, enlarged, and remodelled to the altered character of

the age. Here we find an increased attention given to all those systems which partake of an idealistic character, and a general tone of thinking, far more profound and *spiritual* than that which was observable in the former edition.

In this latter form, the "Histoire Comparée" has proved a valuable auxiliary to eclectism. In presenting a faithful picture of the principal schools of philosophy which have severally played their part in the world, it has broken down a blind attachment to any one peculiar system, and demonstrated the fact, that truth exists, more or less, amongst them all. In a word, M. Degérando, by introducing his readers so fully into the interior of the great philosophies of ancient and more modern times, has induced many a one to become an eclectic, even in spite of himself; so that we must regard his elaborate volumes as no inconsiderable link in the chain of causes, by which the elevation of the eclectic philosophy to so high a position as it now assumes has been effected.

II. We must notice the contributions which have been brought, by *physiological* researches, to the progress of eclecticism in France. Physiology, during the earlier years of this century, was considered to be all on the side of materialism. The views of Cabanis (which we have explained in a former chapter) reigned, for a time, almost supreme among metaphysicians, on the one hand, and the members of the medical faculty, on the other. In proportion, however, as the spirit of philosophy

gradually altered, and the reaction began to manifest itself against sensationalism, in the same proportion we find a corresponding influence exerted upon the speculations of the physiologist, forcing upon his attention facts, which, hitherto, had been either misexplained, or altogether explained away.

In the year 1823, M. Bérard, of Montpellier, published his “*Doctrine des Rapports du Physique et du Moral*,” in which he repelled the materialism of those who had preceded him in his investigation, and showed, upon purely scientific principles, that we *must* admit something beyond the brain and the nerves, to account for the simplest facts of human nature. The position in which he intrenches himself is this; that matter, being dead, motionless, inert, could never give rise to any changes whatever, were there not something beside matter to produce them. We may say, popularly, that certain particles of matter, when brought into contact, give rise to *motion*; but, evidently, it is not the *mere proximity* of them, which could produce such an effect. Proximity is, in fact, only the condition upon which a certain *force* is put into action; and this force is the real *cause* of the whole phenomenon. Wherever there is change or motion, therefore, we must necessarily admit the existence of *power*, and power cannot possibly be conceived of under the idea of atoms, molecules, or of any material type or emblem.

With regard to the real nature of power, this,

of course, must vary with the effects produced. When food is assimilated in the human stomach, here we have in operation a digestive power, of a chemical nature: when life is produced and maintained, we see the exertion of a certain vital power; so, also, when we observe intelligence manifesting itself, we conclude the existence of an intellectual power or principle, which we term mind. In short, all *causes*, according to M. Bérard, are immaterial, or spiritual; and *mind* is the name we give to that peculiar power or cause, by which intelligence and emotion are called forth. To sum up his doctrine in his own words—"The mind is *one*—indivisible, immaterial, though united to the body; it cannot lend itself to this union, except *as mind*, and not according to the law which unites body to body. It cannot be placed by the side, or in the midst of the organs; but it is present in them—it perceives in them—it gives activity to them, and receives it from them. It is bound, in its exercise, by certain physiological and vital conditions, without which it would not be able to display its faculties; but it does not owe these faculties to them; it is a force, in harmony and co-operation with other forces, which all have, in organisation, their functions and their attributes."¹

Another author, who has conducted the physiological argument against materialism with great

¹ On the doctrines of M. Bérard, see Damiron's "Essai sur l'Histoire de Phil." vol. ii. p. 12, *et seq.*; also a brief notice in the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Phil."

ability, is M. Virey, whose volume on the "Vital Power" appeared in the year 1823. According to the theory there maintained, there is a life-power sent forth from God, the great first cause, which is the basis of all the changes that take place in the material universe, and all the phenomena of animated existence. This power we see first giving its crystalline form to the mineral; then entering into all the varied genera and species of the vegetable world; and lastly, achieving its greatest wonders in animal life, and in man as its highest form. This same vital power it is, which, pervading the whole of nature, binds all existence together in the most perfect harmony. Nothing stands isolated and alone; and even man himself, though raised above the rest of creation around, yet is a link in the chain of universal being, having relation both to the life below and the life beyond him. Far as we should be from giving in our entire adherence to a system of nature founded upon the principle just stated, yet we must regard the work of M. Virey as having been in its time highly valuable. The arguments, the assumptions, and the miserable shifts of materialism, were there shown forth in the most plain and palpable manner; the ingenious devices by which Cabanis attempted to overcome the difficulties of his adopted theory, were displayed and refuted; and the necessity was strongly demonstrated of admitting some power or other beyond the mere concurrence of atoms, in order to explain the facts both of life and of intelligence. In a word, M. Virey had

succeeded in strongly impressing upon his own mind the notion of *power* as the basis of all spiritualism; and he felt (as every mind must feel in which this notion has been fully developed) that it is far less possible to banish the existence of some all-pervading and ever energetic power of the universe, than it is to banish the notion of matter itself. Putting the three possible hypotheses of the universe side by side—that which regards it as entirely composed of material atoms, that which regards it as consisting altogether of forces, and that which regards it as a combination of the two, we have no hesitation in saying, that the first is that which we can give up with the least violation of all the fundamental principles of human knowledge.

In a country like France, where materialism had intrenched itself within the conclusions of physiology, it was assuredly no small aid to the progress of eclecticism to find writers like those above mentioned (and other names, perhaps, equally eminent might be added) who were ready to meet the materialist on his own ground, and to dislodge him from his strongest positions.

III. While France, at the beginning of the century, was devoted to the sensational hypothesis, the neighbouring soil of Germany was cherishing a most profound idealism. We may next mention, therefore, one or two French authors, who, from residence in Germany, imbibed the foreign philosophy, and who sought to extend the knowledge of it to their own country. The name of Villers is well known

in this country as the French expositor of Kant's "Critick of Pure Reason." Passing by those, however, who have merely distinguished themselves by expounding the views of others, we may mention one or two writers who have followed a more independent course in advocating their philosophical opinions.

First, we shall refer to the Baron Massias, some time Consul-Général at Hamburg, and afterwards Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin. In this author we recognise a mind which, during a long course of years, has devoted itself with persevering and untiring energy to the study of philosophy. As a writer, he may not appear so attractive as many others, his style aiming rather at expressing his own thoughts, and embodying his own individuality, than adapting itself to the public mind; but it is impossible not to remark in it a great integrity of purpose, and an unbiassed love of truth. His chief work is an elaborate production of five volumes, entitled "*Rapports de l'Homme à la Nature, et de la Nature à l'Homme*," in which he discusses a vast number of questions, touching upon almost all branches of philosophy.

The Baron explains the whole phenomena of humanity under the three facts of instinct, intelligence, and life. Instinct is the foundation of our very existence—that which guides and preserves our life in all its primitive and most essential functions. Intelligence is that which peculiarly distinguishes man as a moral agent; and, lastly, life, as developed

in humanity, is that which results from the harmonious combination, both of instinct and of intelligence. Without instinct, man would not live at all; without intelligence, he would not live morally; under the influence of both together, he lives for the accomplishment of the great end of his being. In a similar strain our author discourses on the world, and on God its first cause. "He regards the whole creation," says M. Damiron, "as a great drama. The mysterious and divine poet who has conceived it, and put it into play, shows himself to no one; he is not here rather than there; he was not yesterday more than to-day; but everywhere and always he makes himself felt. He does not unveil, and yet he proves himself; and, without developing himself intimately, he makes himself known by signs and reveals himself in symbols. This, he considers, if not enough for our curiosity, ought to be enough for our reason."

In 1830, M. Massias published another work, entitled "*Traité de Philosophie Psycho-Physiologique*," in which he has developed the same views as those which are scattered throughout his larger work, with a more particular reference to the physiology of the mind. In addition to this, he has published two controversial pamphlets in opposition to M. Broussais, in which he defends his opinions with much warmth and vigour against the materialism maintained by that author. In fine, though we cannot term M. Massias a professed adherent of eclecticism, yet in many points he coincides fully

with their opinions, and has ever been a zealous co-operator with them in subverting the principles of the sensational school.

Another French author who comes still nearer to the spirit of eclecticism, is M. Ancillon, formerly French Protestant preacher at Berlin, afterwards professor of philosophy at the Military Academy there, and finally minister of foreign affairs to the King of Prussia. M. Ancillon commenced his authorship, in the department of literature and philosophy, so far back as the year 1801 ;¹ and appeared before the public from time to time almost to the period of his death, which took place in 1837. His three principal publications consist of essays and miscellanies, comprising many subjects connected with metaphysics, politics, and general literature. The last work he wrote was an essay upon "Science and Philosophical Faith," in which he takes a review of the conflicting opinions of Germany, and points out in what respect the principal philosophers of that country have erred, from taking an imperfect view of the fundamental principles of human knowledge. His own opinions approach most nearly to those of the school of Jacobi, owing to the great stress he lays upon intuitive knowledge, or, as he

¹ His "*Mélanges de Littérature et de Philosophie*" were published at Berlin in 1801; and a second edition in Paris, in 1809. The "*Essais Philosophiques, ou Nouveaux Mélanges*," appeared in 1817; and the "*Nouveaux Essais*" in 1824. Some years later he published a work, entitled "*Méiateur des Extrêmes en Politique et en Littérature*;" and in 1830, appeared his last labour, "*Sur la Science et la Foi*."

terms it, *philosophical faith*. He regards science, indeed, as nothing more than *faith* developed by reflection, and includes within the circle of this instinctive belief many truths of a purely spiritual nature. Though not an eclectic, in the sense in which that term is applied to the modern spiritualists of France, yet M. Ancillon has displayed the spirit of eclecticism even more fully, perhaps, than some of its professed advocates. Throughout the whole of his career he has been a mediator between extremes, whether in literature, politics, or philosophy; and one of his works, indeed (written originally in the German language), was published with this precise object in view. Although it is the opinion of many, that M. Ancillon is far from profound in the strictures he has made on the German philosophy, and the expositions he has offered of its principal doctrines, yet we should hardly suppose that there can be any other author (M. Cousin excepted) to whom the French public owe so many valuable thoughts from the German literature and philosophy, or any other who has had so direct an influence in rendering the principles of a calm and spiritual philosophy familiar to their minds.

IV. In rendering an account of the various influences that have borne upon the modern philosophy of France, we must not overlook those which have emanated from Switzerland. From its geographical situation, and, as it regards most of its inhabitants, from a community of language, Switzerland has necessarily stood in close relationship with

Germany. On the other hand, that portion of the country which uses the French language, and of which we may regard Geneva as virtually the centre, has been almost as closely united to Scotland, both by religious sympathies and historical recollections. As a proof of this, be it remembered that the philosophy of Reid and Stewart found there its first asylum on the Continent of Europe. Amidst all the predominant French influence, therefore, which Switzerland experienced at the time of the Revolution, there was ever mingled an under-current of opposing thoughts and feelings, arising from the Scottish philosophy on the one hand, and the German idealism on the other. Notwithstanding the strong sensational tendency manifested by Bonnet (one of the first metaphysicians of Switzerland during the last century), we find in such writers as M. Prévost, and even in those who were pupils of Bonnet himself, an extreme readiness to throw off the fetters of the sensational system in which they were educated, and to adopt the more profound and spiritual conclusions of the Scottish writers. The only author to which we shall now make any distinct reference is M. Bonstetten, in whose works the critical reader will not fail to trace the combined influence of Condillac, of Kant, and of Reid. His works consist of two volumes, entitled "*Recherches sur l'Imagination*," published in 1807; and two others, entitled "*Études de l'Homme*," published in the year 1821; in both of which there is manifested the same earnest philosophical spirit, which

is so well calculated at once to please and instruct the reader. The chief aim of his writings is to analyse the intellectual and active powers, to show the proper sphere in which each of them operates and the ideas to which they give rise. Perhaps he most nearly resembles a pupil of the school of Reid and Stewart, exhibiting much of the same shrewd psychological observation, the same moderation in his aims and purposes, and the same good sense generally, which have ever characterised the Scottish metaphysicians.

The influence of his works upon France must have been decidedly in favour of eclecticism. Firmly attached to spiritualism on the one hand, and ever ready to borrow light from whatever source on the other, he clearly sympathised in the main principles for which the eclectic philosophers of that country have struggled ; and to him, accordingly, they have appealed, as affording an unbiassed testimony in favour of their own opinions. M. Bonstetten died in the year 1831, having completed eighty-six years, during the greater part of which he had lived faithful in his devotion to the cause of philosophical truth.

V. After having noticed the above extraneous sources, from which the eclectic philosophy has received aid and encouragement, we must now conclude by pointing out one or two philosophical writers, purely and exclusively French, who, without strictly adhering to eclecticism, have shown their sympathy with the anti-sensational movement

of the present day. Among these we should place M. Thurot, who was carried off in the prime of life by the fearful epidemic with which the French capital was so severely visited, in the year 1832. This learned and elegant author had published, shortly before his death, a work, in two volumes, entitled "*De l'Entendement et de la Raison.*" By the understanding he means the intellectual faculty generally; by the reason he signifies merely the proper use and employment of our faculties. The general character of the work is almost entirely psychological. It treats, first, of knowledge as derived from perception; then, of knowledge in relation to language; thirdly, of the powers of the will; and, lastly, of the moral faculty. The author does not enter, to any extent, into the deeper questions of ontology, nor does he discuss at any length the spirituality of the mind. It is evident, however, that his own views are decidedly opposed to materialism; and were we called upon to class him under any school, we should say, as we did of M. Bonstetten, that in his habits of psychological observation, and the general tone of his philosophical writings, he might best pass as a follower of the Scottish school of intellectual philosophy. M. Thurot was a friend and disciple of M. Laromiguière, and we may reckon him, therefore, as belonging to the eclectic school in that particular stage of its progress.

Another philosophical writer of the same class is M. Cardaillac, author of a work entitled "*Études*

élémentaires de Philosophie." In this work we see simply a somewhat further development of the philosophy of M. Laromiguière, in which the principal defects of that author are supplied, and some of his cruder views matured. Like M. Thurot, he is clearly opposed to sensationalism, and may be regarded as no mean coadjutor, though not a decided adherent of modern eclecticism.

Among the most prominent and most voluminous writers of France at the present time, stands M. Lerminier, professor of philosophy at the College of France. A succession of works upon the philosophy of jurisprudence, and upon the history of metaphysical systems in different countries, written with great brilliancy of style and vigour of mind, have achieved for him a reputation, which if it may not prove to be perennial, yet at least sheds some glory around his name as an author and a philosopher. M. Lerminier has united himself to no school, and perhaps his opinions are not very clearly defined. Of sensational principles, however, he has ever shown himself a stern opponent ; and although he has far more sympathy with the spirit of eclecticism as now developed in France, yet he has thrown out even against *it* some bold and vigorous objections. His aim appears to be to hold up the necessity of founding a native philosophy in France ; which, though grounded upon the nature and authority of the human mind, shall contemplate it in its historical development, as achieving for itself new conquests in the departments of art, of science, of politics, of

social institutions, and of religion. In brief, M. Lerminier having well mastered the main principles of the German philosophy, and being evidently impressed with the validity of many of its researches, would unite with its results the idea of progress, as proclaimed by the historical school of France, and thus combine the deep metaphysics of the one with the traditional and progressive light of the other.¹

We have thus briefly passed under review a number of metaphysical writers (to which several more might have been added,) who, though not professing eclecticism, yet have taken their part in the reformation of the French philosophy. Our chief object in doing so has been, not so much to make our readers acquainted with their particular views (which could not be satisfactorily done in a mere manual,) as to show that the reaction in France against the materialistic school of the last century, has been more general and more decided than is frequently imagined. All this multiplicity of antagonism, which the bold assumption of the sensational writers called forth, has, in fact, only tended to encourage and develop the spirit of eclecticism, in its more recent and energetic form.

We venture to predict, that there is no school of philosophy, that has arisen since the revival of

¹ The principal works of M. Lerminier are a "Philosophie du Droit," 2 vols. 8vo, Par. 1831; "Études d'Histoire de Philosophie," Par. 1836; "Cours d'Histoire des Législations comparée," Par. 1837; together with some minor works principally on the German philosophy, of which the most interesting, as far as I have read them, is that entitled "Au delà du Rhin."

literature in Europe, which is likely to leave broader traces behind it, and play a more important part in the development of the human mind, than is that to which this chapter has been devoted. In point of originality, it must doubtless yield the palm to the idealism of Germany; but as in other branches of learning, so also in philosophy, Germany seems destined to afford the *material*, which the more skilful and adroit minds of England and France are to employ for the enlightenment and advancement of the great mass of humanity. Modern eclecticism, though but of a few years' growth, has already begun to put forth its vigour in many parts of the world. In addition to its having succeeded in arousing France from the torpor of its extreme materialism—in addition to its having re-infused into that great people a fresh taste for spiritual, and even religious ideas—it has crossed the Atlantic, and founded, in America, a colony which bids fair to embrace and direct all the metaphysical tendencies of the New World. England, moreover, is now beginning to appreciate the labours of modern eclecticism; and if we are destined, ere long, to awake from the slumber, with which, as far as philosophy is concerned, we have now, for many years past, been oppressed, we must look to the spiritual movement of France, as the chief source from which our new life is to be derived. Already can we trace its influence upon some of the most popular and most metaphysical of our writers; and we trust that, ere long, we may see

the elements of a new school of philosophy on this side the Channel, which may emulate France in those points which are most worthy our imitation.

In estimating the merits of the eclectic school, care should be taken not to confound it with that paltry attempt at philosophising, which, for want of any decided views whatever, puts together a misshapen and incoherent mass of other men's opinions. Eclecticism, as now advocated and understood, takes in a range of investigation, wide as philosophy itself. Philosophy has a history in the world, as well as humanity; and the true eclectic simply aims at studying it in its historical development. He regards the human reason as a germ, which has been ever unfolding, and is destined yet to unfold, so long as the purposes of providence respecting mankind go on to accomplish themselves upon the stage of human life. It is true, that we find the same great questions produced and reproduced, the same systems sinking and rising again, the same problems ever solving, and yet to be solved. Still, with all this, there has been a gradual progress in the development of truth in the world; so that, instead of rejecting all the labours of those great minds which have preceded us in the domains of philosophy, and beginning to build a new edifice for each succeeding generation, it does appear to us both right and necessary to stand upon the elevation already attained, and to strive to add our portion, small as it may be, to the erection of the edifice of philosophical truth. This is the spirit of eclec-

ticism—a philosophy which, under the influence of meagre erudition, may, it is true, easily dwindle down to absolute insignificance ; but which, under the guidance of sound learning and intellectual power, promises the richest harvest to the patient and vigorous labourer.¹

¹ *Vid.* Appendix, Note H.

PART III.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE TENDENCIES OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

WE have now completed the primary object we had in view ; namely, to portray the broader *characteristics* which the speculative philosophy of the nineteenth century has already assumed. Before we close the subject, however, and bring our labour to its termination, we have thought it might add somewhat to the completeness of the sketch, were we to occupy a few pages in elucidating the *tendencies* of the different systems which have been discussed.

By the tendencies of a metaphysical system, we mean the whole mass of ultimate consequences, which can be fairly and logically drawn from its acknowledged principles. These consequences, it must be remembered, are not always seen in the simple doctrines it maintains, or in the objects which it professes to aim at ; very frequently, we find it giving rise to sentiments, which were sup-

posed altogether foreign from its original principles, and accomplishing ends, at first by no means contemplated. Philosophical ideas are mighty and pregnant germs, which may expand almost to infinity; and often, it is no more possible to say, at once, what lies potentially in a given principle, than it would be to predict, from the appearance of some strange root or seed, of what kind is the plant which it will eventually produce.

In order, then, to understand what the tendencies of any system of philosophy really are, there are two methods which may be employed for the purpose; the one is the method of deduction, the other, of observation—the former being an *a priori*, the latter an *a posteriori* process. In employing the *deductive* method, our aim is to unfold the consequences which lie hidden in any given principles, by *logical reasoning*. This is, in fact, what almost all speculative philosophy aims at. The germs of all abstract truth exist, virtually, in every rational mind, only in a crude and undeveloped state; and it is for philosophy to make us reflectively conscious of what these germs really contain. The whole history of philosophy, indeed, is but the history of the successive attempts which have been made to decipher the characters engraven by Deity upon the tablet of the human soul. To comprehend, therefore, the tendencies of any principles *a priori*, we must reason or philosophise upon them, until the thought they contain is expanded and realised. In employing, on the other hand, the *a posteriori*

method, all we have to do, is to note down the effects, which history or personal observation show to have actually arisen from the principles in question. This experimental process is often necessary, to confirm or verify the conclusions of our *a priori* reasoning; and it is when both methods are employed in conjunction, that the clearest and fullest results are obtained.

But there is another thought, on which we must lay some stress, in connexion with the tendencies of philosophy; namely, that to estimate the effects of abstract principles aright, we must not confine our view simply to the *metaphysical* theories they involve. Metaphysical ideas exert a vast influence out of the region of philosophy itself; and it is in these, their indirect and collateral bearings, that their true tendencies are most readily observed. The precise object, then, which we have before us in the present chapter, is to look at the four generic systems, whose characteristics we have already portrayed, in connexion with some of those other spheres of human thought and activity, upon which their influence is most observable. This, it will be seen, has an important bearing upon the future. If, by logical reasoning, aided by past experience, we are able to unfold the natural effects of these different schools of philosophy, upon questions of great practical moment, in society at large, we have, in fact, the key by which to interpret at once their present tendencies, and their future influence upon the coming history of mankind.

The next point to be considered is,—What spheres of human thought and activity might be best adduced, as exemplifying the tendencies of philosophical systems? Here, of course, a wide field of observation opens itself before us. Literature, art, government, history—almost every branch of human research, might be regarded, one after the other, as modelled upon the type of certain fundamental conceptions, and varying, just in proportion as those conceptions vary. In order, however, to bring our remarks within a closer compass, we shall select for illustration *three* of the provinces of man's mental activity, in which the working of philosophical ideas is more direct and apparent; and these are the respective provinces of Science, Legislation, and Religion.

First, then, we say, that the tendency of abstract philosophy may be seen, by its effect upon the progress of *scientific investigation*. Nothing can be more erroneous than the supposition, that the pursuit of physical science lies entirely without the range of abstract thinking, or that it consists wholly in the collection and classification of facts. Facts *alone* can never create science. They may furnish, it is true, the data on which it rests; but science, properly so called, only results, when these facts are consciously grounded in some conception, and tend to educe some general principle. The facts of mathematical science, for example, rest ultimately upon the pure conceptions, either of number or space; those of natural philosophy, upon the idea

of causality; those of physiology, upon the notion of life; and so, in every instance, there is some *thought*, from which each particular branch of investigation springs, as well as some general law or principle, at which it aims. For science, then, to advance, it is just as necessary that these abstract conceptions should be made clear and distinct, as that facts should be collected; and while the latter process requires the constant aid of observation and experiment, the former can only be finally accomplished by a well cultivated and philosophical habit of *thinking*. Science is as much indebted to those who have expounded its nature, its conceptions, and its method, as to those who have collected its actual data. It was Bacon's metaphysical genius, for example, which turned the stream of physical investigation into the right channel; which laid open the true method, by which it should be conducted; and which enabled mankind to recover, in three centuries, the loss of labour they had sustained during two thousand years previous. Generally, then, we may say, that in proportion as philosophy has succeeded in clearing our conceptions, the facts of observation become so much the more available for the construction of science.

Again,—the tendency of philosophical systems is seen in their influence upon the principles of *legislation*. Society is humanity in its natural combination; and according to our estimate of what the fundamental laws, wants, and characteristics generally of human nature are, will be the princi-

ples of government, which are seen to be adapted to it. The statesman, who legislates for man as nothing more than a superior animal, will follow a very different course in the application of his authority, from one who feels, that our humanity is Divine, and can only thrive under the shadow of eternal justice, rectitude, and truth. The sensational moralist, as a legislator, will seek to satisfy our corporal desires and appetites at whatever cost; the spiritual moralist, as a legislator, will seek first to respect and to nurture the freedom, the justice, the moral dignity, from which all true national greatness must spring.

Thirdly,—it is hardly necessary to make any preliminary remarks upon the manner in which philosophical ideas influence our *theological creed* and our *religious practice*. If it be true that the foundation of theology is found in the laws of our reason, and the witness they bear to the being of a God; if it be true, that the germ of the religious *life* is cradled in the affections of our nature; if it be true, that the human intellect must decide upon the authenticity of a Divine revelation, and interpret the documents by which it is conveyed to us;—then it becomes evident, that the conclusions of philosophy upon the validity of reason and the nature of the affections, must intimately affect the whole region of theology itself. With these few preliminary observations, then, we shall proceed at once to the particular object of the present chapter, namely, to point out, as far as we may be able, the respective

tendencies of the different systems of philosophy which prevail in this our nineteenth century.

SECT. I.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Sensationalism.*

The first or lowest step of sensationalism is that which teaches us to attach an undue importance to the intimations of the senses: the extreme development of it is, to symbolise everything with the material; to make the soul synonymous with the brain, and God but the abstraction of nature. Between these two points there is an infinite number of positions, which can be held by minds of a sensational tendency; and an infinite number of applications of the views thus maintained.

A. According, then, to our proposed plan, we shall first notice the tendency of sensationalism within the domain of physical science. Now, physical science, being an expansion of the fundamental idea of *nature*, is one of the most necessary products of a sensational age. Physics, however, are not always regarded in one and the same point of view, either in respect to their nature or their objects: they have always had their deeper and more recondite, as well as their more superficial movement. While, on the one hand, they may simply include the most common-place observation of facts, yet they may reach, on the other hand, the highest degree of scientific abstraction. Starting with a simple clas-

sification of palpable phenomena, they may acquire progressively more and more generality ; until, from being a science of simple observation, they become at length, to a great extent, one of purely rational deduction. The known laws of the heavenly bodies were first included in the scanty observations of the Chaldaean shepherd ; now they are reduced to the abstract doctrine of forces ; this doctrine itself, too, reposing upon the still more abstract and recondite conceptions of *power* and *motion*.

Hence, we may observe the difference that will manifest itself between the science of an objective and that of a subjective age. The former will strive to create an empirical picture of the universe ; it will add fact to fact, and phenomenon to phenomenon, until the whole machinery of nature, which is open to the outward observer, shall have been described. The latter, on the contrary, will be ever searching either into the *forces* by which the world is governed, endeavouring to generalise them to their highest degree, and seeking to reduce them to their most abstract form ; or, into the *ends*, towards which all the phenomena of nature are ever pointing. The one will investigate chiefly the matter of our knowledge, the other will investigate the form ; the one will collect the facts, the other will explain the conceptions in which those facts are grounded ; the one will inquire little after the First Cause, as lying beyond the reach of sensible observation ; the other will attempt to conceive how all creation has flowed forth from the prime creating mind ; the one

will look upon all things simply as *facts*, the other will view them in relation to their eternal *purposes*.

Now, although the rash spirit of the French Encyclopædist has happily disappeared, yet various indications still exist, in different parts of Europe, of such a sensational tendency in the investigations of physical science. Some of these indications are observable in the department of general physics, others more especially in that of physiology. To distinguish these tendencies of modern sensationalism from each other, we may call the former its *cosmological*, the latter its *physiological* tendencies.

First, then, sensationalism in its cosmological tendencies always evinces a disposition more or less decisive to erect the idea of nature over that of God ; that is, to merge the notion of a final cause in the totality of secondary causes around us. So it is in the present day. France, England, Germany, all three rivals to each other in the discoveries of science, have each given recent manifestations of the still powerful influence of empiricism within the domain of natural philosophy. France, as might have been supposed, has led the way. Not many years have elapsed since M. Comte poured forth his startling doctrines upon the world, and attempted to persuade mankind that this glorious universe which we inhabit, has come into being by the spontaneous working of mechanical laws.

In our own country, and far more recently, the

scientific world has been thrown into commotion by the anonymous appearance of the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation." In this work, we have a very plausible, though a very imperfectly sustained effort of empiricism, to explain the process of creation. God is here placed at some immeasurable distance from the universe, while *it* is left to proceed onwards in its process of self-development, and to bring all its multifarious phenomena into being, by virtue of certain laws originally impressed upon it. The theory, stripped of all its adornments, is this:—That it is possible, one vast universe of nebula being granted, to trace the whole method by which it has assumed its present form, with all its endless diversities, *through the medium of the physical laws now seen to be in operation*. It is true, that the *a posteriori* argument for the being of God is not materially affected by this system, supposing it to be true, because *law* must have a creator and a designer, as well as the most fully developed existences: but the general impression of the theory is one which leads us to exclude Deity from any *immediate* connexion with, or interest in, the universe he has made.

Such an effect, however, we are far from thinking rationally deduced, even on the supposition that the physical processes and laws, which the author attempts to make out, were fairly established. *Laws*, after all, are merely abstractions; the *power* itself which works in them is still Divine; so that, should the process, by which everything comes into being,

be at length explained, the proper influence, so far from excluding Deity, would be only to make us more than ever cognisant of the immediate workings of the Divine hand around us. The whole theory has emanated, as it appears to us, from a mind in which the idea of *nature* has obtained the great predominance over our other fundamental conceptions, in which the *power of intelligent mind* is sunk in the vague notion of law; and in which, as a natural consequence, Providence (that is, the presence of the mind of God in the world) is reduced almost, if not altogether, to a nonentity. Those who would further investigate the conclusions of this remarkable work, conclusions so plausibly supported and so eloquently drawn, should not forbear to read the article in the "Edinburgh Review," in which the scientific accuracy of the unknown author is probed with the hand of a master, and his theory estimated with great acuteness.

Since the publication, we may remark, of several works of a somewhat similar tendency (of which "Combe's Constitution of Man" may be taken as a fair specimen), it has become by no means uncommon, with many beside the author of the "Vestiges," to push aside the doctrine of Providence as a thing altogether exploded. Now we are quite ready to admit, that the common idea of Providence has had many absurdities clinging around it, and that such works as the above have brought many truths respecting the influence of the natural laws to light, which had been too much overlooked. But here,

unfortunately, we find, as in most other instances, that a principle, when once applied with success, is apt to be generalised altogether beyond its legitimate extent; and that a true idea, once too eagerly grasped, is sure to be worked threadbare before it is fairly dismissed. The fact that God operates by the medium of natural laws, does not, in the least, *exclude* the idea of providential interposition or superintendence. What are the natural laws after all? They are not real existences. They merely express *modes of the Divine operation*, which we are able to trace in the world around us. That God operates in these modes, does not imply that he operates in no other; nor does the fact, that an event takes place by some secondary agency, exclude it from a specific participation in the Divine plan *as a whole*.

Let us assume a case for example. Suppose a man by some act of imprudence to contract a disease, and hasten on his death. One says, in contemplating the scene, it is a dispensation of Providence. Not at all, says another, it is the natural effect of the laws which he foolishly violated. We rejoin, however, *that it is both*. The man broke the law, and paid the penalty; but every thought, every purpose, every action, every circumstance, in a word, which influenced that man's life, and led him at length into the fatal resolution under which he fell, has depended upon a succession of agencies reaching back even to his infancy; and these agencies, be it remembered, all belong to the region of God's moral

government. We do not say that they are fixed by a stern necessity, since that would destroy the notion of human liberty, but they are all under the *moral control* of Deity from first to last, so that the penalty, which seems at first to be simply the result of breaking a natural law, is really an effect of that providential power which governs the world. Human things may *appear* to the unthinking to be absolutely controlled by the fixed laws of our being; but if we look beneath the surface, we see the hand of God moving all the springs, and making every event, even those arising from our free agency itself, contribute to the development of his purposes.

How marvellous an exemplification does history give us of the manner in which human agency is blended with Divine Providence! The sum and substance of the world's history is but the aggregate of the voluntary actions of mankind upon the stage of human life. Whilst, however, this is the case, yet God himself has composed the drama; it is he that framed the law of human progress; he that brings about its accomplishment by actions, which to us, indeed, are voluntary, but which, notwithstanding, form a part of his own great plan from all eternity. To the man who looks unbelievingly upon Divine Providence, the world's history is a problem that can never be solved.

It is not only in France and England, however, that we find the influence of sensationalism within the department of natural philosophy. Germany, too, which has recently been making great progress

in physical research, has just given rise to a work of extraordinary popularity, which stands forth in bold contrast to the rationalistic systems for which that country has been famed; I mean the "Cosmos" of the Baron von Humboldt. Little more, perhaps, could be observed with justice respecting the sensational tendency of this work, than the total rejection which the author indicates of all attempts to form an *a priori* explanation of the laws of the universe, and the purely objective course which he follows in all his own researches. We see throughout the whole the traces of a mind in which the observing powers are wonderfully active, while the eye, by which we were designed to gaze upon the supersensual and spiritual world, has comparatively speaking grown dim. The value of the facts which are brought forward by the Baron is, of course, not at all affected by this objective manner of viewing them; the only thing to be wished were that the learned author had gained some idea of assigning their ends, and of tracing them up to their Divine and spiritual source. On this point, however, his language is anything but satisfactory. "In submitting," he remarks, "physical phenomena and historical events to the exercise of the reflective faculty, and in ascending by reasoning to their causes, we become more and more penetrated by that ancient belief, that the forces inherent in matter and those regulating the moral world exert their action under the presence of a *primordial necessity*, and according to movements periodically

renewed at longer or shorter intervals." And, again, he says, "True to the character of my earlier writings, and to the nature of my occupations, I confine myself strictly to empirical considerations. This is the only ground upon which I feel myself competent to move without sense of insecurity." And so this is the end of a long life's search into the wonders and glories of nature—either to hover in doubt and insecurity around the idea of a primordial necessity, or to entertain that of a godless universe. Thus it is, while the spiritual eye and the higher reason can see God all around, the sensational theorist, for ever immersed in the "dark windings of the material and the earthy," gradually loses all perception of the infinite and the Divine. Here, as everywhere, the error of sensationalism in the department of natural philosophy is one of defect; the observer is impelled onwards to an unlimited extent in the collection of data, but he stops short in his investigation ere he has attempted to trace them to their first cause, or to realise the manner in which the material is all cradled and embosomed in the spiritual.

So far, then, we notice the present aspect of sensationalism in its cosmological tendency; we now add a few words respecting its physiological tendency. Here, as in the last case, the gross materialism of the French sensational school is at present comparatively seldom met with. Few will at present attempt to argue, like Cabanis, that all intelligence consists in sensation, and that all sensation

resides in the nerves; the bolder assumptions of this system consequently have been fairly controverted and overthrown. Whilst, however, the system as a whole has been refuted, yet the same doctrine under another form virtually lives on, in that peculiar school of cerebral physiology, which has adopted extreme phrenological principles. In this view of the case, materialism has far greater plausibility. The theory of Cabanis was not built upon any true idea. It was an enormous error to assert, that all intelligence is but a form of sensation; and not less so, to suppose that sensation resides in the nerves; but the materialism of the ultra-phrenologists is grounded upon a true idea, namely, that cerebral development is inseparably connected (as we are now constituted) with mental manifestation. Let the notion of efficient causes be rejected; let simple antecedence and consequence be regarded as the whole process of causation; and from the phrenological hypothesis materialism necessarily results. The argument lies in a small compass. Here is the antecedent on the one hand, namely, cerebral excitement; here is the consequent on the other, mental manifestation. What need have we of any link between them, termed mind or spirit? The whole process is complete without it. The reply to this is a simple one, namely, that all causation implies power or force; that power, wherever exerted or through whatever medium, is an immaterial thing; much more so, that wondrous power of which we are hourly conscious, and which

we term mind. The due analysis of the idea we have under the one term *power*, cuts at the root of all materialism, of whatever nature or complexion it may be. We lay the more stress upon making this analysis aright, and firmly grasping the idea resulting from it, because the present tendency of sensationalism, in the hands of the phrenologist, is fast bearing us back to the materialism we had disowned, and can only be stayed by upholding the infinite distinction between the organ or law of any operation on the one hand, and the *power* which produces it on the other.

Before we conclude these remarks upon the influence of sensationalism within the department of physics, we must add a word or two respecting its influence upon the *method of scientific investigation*. It is here that the assistance of philosophy is more immediately felt, and more imperatively demanded. Vigorous efforts have been put forth from time to time in our own day to reduce the laws of induction to a system of definite rules, and base them upon philosophical principles; and these efforts in every case have been modified by the metaphysical views which the author of them has adopted. The two great writers on the logic of induction, which our age can boast as peculiarly its own, are Professor Whewell and Mr Mill, whose works, when put side by side with each other, present a very instructive instance of the manner in which the fundamental principles of philosophy can bear upon the method of scientific research.

The former, as we have already seen, is decidedly of an anti-sensational tendency; and the effect of this is seen in the whole theory he has propounded respecting the construction of science.¹ The latter must be reckoned as belonging to the sensationalist school. Yet so different in his sensationalism from what we have seen in the French materialist, that we may almost regard him as a proof of the reaction which has set in against their extreme empirical principles. The stress which is laid upon the deductive method, the close, and often admirable analyses which are given of many of our fundamental conceptions, and the whole tone of philosophical thinking by which his "Logic" is characterised, manifest a very different spirit from that of the shallow empiricism of the preceding age. We believe that the *method* of science in the hands of such analysts is not destined to continue slavishly conformed to the Baconian model, but that it will become more and more deductive, in proportion as the data are enlarged upon which legitimate deduction can proceed.

B. We advance now to notice the tendencies of sensationalism, as seen in the department of legislation. Many of the philosophers, both of ancient and modern times, who have taken any comprehensive views of mental science, have applied their system to the investigation of the fundamental principles of jurisprudence. Several of our English

¹ See our remarks upon Whewell, in the section upon Modern English Idealism.

philosophical writers, for example, from Hobbes downwards, have applied their principles to the elucidation of this subject; and a still greater number, perhaps, of the French moralists, induced, probably, by the political aspect of their country, have attempted to philosophise upon the grounds of law, government, and social life. Germany, too, though so much more fixed in its political relations, and so much more given to transcendental researches, yet has not been behind-hand in deducing theories of legislation from the different metaphysical systems it has originated. Thus, it is evident, that the various philosophical ideas, which have been in vogue, have had great influence upon the political principles of every age.

Now, if all human knowledge be reducible to the three fundamental ideas of self, nature, and God, it follows, that every theory of law and government must find its primary conception in one of these notions. On passing the different theories of government before our view, we find, accordingly, that they admit of a very easy classification, on this principle. Some jurists, for example, regard all law as proceeding from God; his is the right supreme, and He has delegated a divine right to whomsoever He will, to exercise power and authority in the world. Those, accordingly, to whom this right is granted, are the only proper dispensers of law to man—every human enactment being founded on the Divine will, expressed through them as its appointed organ. Another theory, or, we may say,

class of theories, is built upon the indestructible facts and phenomena of the human mind. Man has the notion of *justice*; he sees in every fellow-man the possessor of certain inalienable rights; and upon these firm moral convictions of the human mind, the social fabric is to be erected. Again, a third hypothesis bases all human legislation upon mere expediency or utility; moral principle, as a separate ground of legal enactment, being discarded, and the outward happiness of the community being the sole guide, by which the legislator is to be directed in his course.

Of these three hypotheses, the last is evidently that which would result from a sensational philosophy; the two former would as naturally flow from an idealistic or a mystical system. Sensational ethics affirm, that a thing is right because it is expedient—the ethics of idealism maintain, that it is expedient because it is right. In this, we have presented to us the great question, which stands at the threshold of all morals and all legislation; and it is according as the one or other hypothesis is accepted, that the whole complexion of the succeeding system will be determined. Let us see how these conclusions are illustrated by the history of the present century.

No author, in modern times, has advocated the sensational theory of morals with so great warmth and vigour as Jeremy Bentham; it is in the political school of Bentham, therefore, that we are to look for the due influence of sensationalism, as ap-

plied to the department of legislation. And what is the doctrine which that school has maintained? It has maintained, that the sole basis of right is expediency; that the sole incentive to human action is self-interest; and that all law and all government must proceed upon the supposition, that men will be influenced exclusively by motives of personal advancement. This doctrine, indeed, we must admit, holds a somewhat strong position, from the fact of its embodying so large an amount of truth, to counterbalance its great deficiency in principle. No one can deny, that self-interest is a very fruitful motive to human action, and that the legislator must keep this in view, in all the details of his legislative arrangements. It was just to this point, therefore, that Bentham directed his chief attention; and few there are who would be unwilling to accord him his meed of praise, for the many abuses he exposed, and the many sound truths he inculcated. But, with all this, we are far from thinking that Bentham rose to the full height of his argument, or rested his primary principles upon a right foundation. Legislation, when adapted simply to the outward circumstances of the community, and springing from the morals of self-interest, may, at first sight, appear very popular in its results; but, with all this, it is forgotten, that men are by far the most powerfully moved by educational, moral, and spiritual motives, and that, while immediate abuses can be kept off by an external policy, yet the true greatness, happiness, and stability of a country can only

be secured by inculcating, by all possible methods, in all institutions, and upon all minds, *eternal justice and truth*. The principle of expediency, we allow, must not be, by any means, neglected, in legislating for the physical interests of the people; but expediency becomes a danger and a curse, the moment it fails to take its stand upon the laws of our moral nature, upon the principles of eternal rectitude, between man and man.

By far the most able advocate of Bentham's school of legislation, in this country, was Mr James Mill; and as this acute writer has given us both an "Analysis of the Human Mind," and an "Essay on Government," we can, in his case, trace the influence of a sensational philosophy upon the theory of legislation, with much greater ease and distinctness. The whole theory is here seen to flow from the fundamental principle, that all our mental phenomena arise from sensation, as their primary source. If this principle be true, then sensation is generically the same as desire; desire, moreover, is identical with the will. Consequently, all the phenomena of our moral being are but different cases, in which we seek the fulfilment of our desires; that is, in other words, the gratification of our sensitivity. With such a psychology, morals become necessarily of the selfish character; all motives to action must centre in our personal happiness; and legislation, consequently, must regard man as impelled by no other impulses or principles, in the whole course of his practical life.

The axiom, that men follow their interest, whenever they know it, cannot, we contend, be sustained with any approach to plausibility. For what does interest mean? If it mean the general well-being, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, then we know that many will sacrifice this to their own private ends; or, if it mean the prominent desire which exists, at any given time, in the mind, then we know that many desire, and feel that they desire, what is not to their interest at all. In the whole of this theory of expediency, whether applied to ethics or legislation, there is an omission of the element of the *will*, the human personality, with all the moral principles originally impressed upon it. Once regard men as possessors of a moral nature, as impelled or restrained by the voice of conscience, as having the broad distinctions of right and wrong marked out in plain characters upon their very being, and inheriting a freedom of action, by which they can follow voluntarily the one course or the other; once regard them, in a word, as having a tribunal of justice within, and convinced of an eternal justice hereafter, and you see before you springs of action more potent than all self-interest, and elements of social life, which must lie at the basis of all true legislation. Sensationalism, wanting in these fundamental ideas and principles, has thrown out upon the public, from time to time, theories of government, as crude in their plan, as Utopian in their execution. Social systems in England, industrial theories on the Continent, and models of republics in

both, have been held up for the admiration of the world; but all, as far as they regard man merely in his external relations, and consider him as the creature of outward circumstances, evince a radical deficiency, which nothing but sounder views of human nature can supply. If the actions of mankind are to be regulated, so as to conduce to the ultimate welfare of the community, then the foundation of all such regulations is to be found, not in a calculation of consequences, which, to our short-sightedness, must be infinitely imperfect, but in a clear comprehension of those moral laws, which God himself has formed, as the directories of human action, and the sources of the gradual perfection of human society.

C. It yet remains to notice the tendency of sensationalism, as exhibited in its bearing upon *theology*. As all human knowledge rests upon the three notions of nature, mind, and God, it follows, that an intelligence, in which these notions each occupy their due place, and keep up the exact balance which was intended to exist in our mental constitution, must be in the most natural and perfect state of development. Experience shows us, that if one of these notions become too prominent, the other two must proportionally sink into the shade, until, perchance, their fading hues entirely vanish away.

Now, theology, in its broadest acceptance, is based upon two of these fundamental notions—those, namely, of *mind* and of *God*. Accordingly, if the idea of the material, or the visible, become all-predominant in the mind, just in the same pro-

portion, (and that by a fixed law of our nature,) must the thoughts, on which theology is built, become dim, and the theology itself be shallow and incomplete. Hence it is, that the mind, whose attention is mainly directed to external things, experiences a want of intensity in all its religious conceptions, and though speculatively convinced of their truth, yet can never realise them with clearness and with power. On these principles, we can easily estimate the effect of a sensational philosophy upon man's perception of religious truth; for, just in proportion as the sensational element becomes more predominant, shall we find elevated and spiritual views, both of God and of man, dying away, until they become at length altogether unappreciated.

First, let us illustrate the truth of these conclusions, with respect to our *theistic* conceptions. The unobscured reason, in the present state of man's mental development, conceives of God, as an *infinite personality*; to it, the immensity of the Deity does not detract aught from his individuality, as the presiding *mind*, that directs the universe by unerring wisdom and benevolence. Nay, further; philosophy has not repudiated the existence of those diversities in the Divine unity, the reflection of which there is in man himself. The spiritual vision, even of some heathen minds, did not fail to see, in the infinite being, that blending of unity and plurality, which is the type of all perfection; and to the Christian idealist, the mystery of a Trinity has rarely proved a stone of stumbling, or a rock of

offence. But no sooner does reason become “immersed in matter,” than these conceptions of Deity grow strange and incredible—his personality, *as a mind*, becomes gradually sunk in the general notion of a great first cause, and his *specific* moral attributes, in the physical idea of his immensity and infinity.

Were we called upon to explain the progressive influence of sensationalism upon man’s theistic conceptions, we should do so somewhat in the following manner. The first effect is to weaken our perception of the Divine personality; this, in the second place, makes itself apparent by overturning the doctrine of a particular providence; next, in order to remove the Divine working further away from the world, secondary causes are adduced to explain, not only all the phenomena of nature, but also the direction of human life; and then, lastly, the process advancing one step further, it begins to be an object of speculation and of doubt whether there be a distinct personality in the Deity or not; until, at length, the conception of God is entirely blended with that of the order and unity of nature.

Again, equally decisive is the effect of sensationalism upon the views we have been taught to entertain of man as a creature of God. To the eye of sense a state of moral perfection is something altogether transcendental—the dream of some glowing imagination. To it the present life appears void of any moral perturbation; man needs no redemption from it; he requires no Divine impulse beyond what exists

originally in his own faculties ; and as for immortality, it is a boon which he may long to realise, but the reality of which is by no means clear and certain. In a word, man is to the sensationalist *wholly material* ; his pleasure on earth is but the result of nervous affections ; and it is hard to give any reason why the capacity of thought itself should not pass away for ever when the bodily structure is dissolved by death.

Such, we might predict, would naturally be the dictates of a sensational philosophy ; such, experience tells us, that they actually are. The first real philosopher of more recent times, who advocated the doctrines of materialism with zeal and ability, was Dr Priestley ; and the influence of these doctrines upon his theological views was plain and undeniable. We see in him a living representative of the sensational theologian, in the first stage of his progress towards the system we have just described. That this is the tendency of Priestley's philosophy, as it regards theological opinion, has been granted by many of his own professed followers, both in England and America. Not a few have felt and lamented the want of depth and intensity in spiritual ideas, which the inculcation of that philosophy gradually superinduced, and, as the best evidence of this conviction, have renounced sensationalism, in order to find in a more spiritual philosophy an antagonist tendency, and a more steady ground of belief in the soul, in immortality, and in God. Wherever sensationalism, however, has gone on,

uncontrolled either by a belief in revelation on the one hand, or the antagonism of idealistic doctrines on the other, (a state of things which we see exemplified in France at the commencement of the present century,) little additional impulse has there been required to draw the deluded minds of its votaries into such an abyss of scepticism as we have already described.

To go very particularly into this branch of the subject, however, might, we fear, seem to savour of religious partisanship rather than philosophical impartiality. To prevent this, we shall avoid entering into details, and confine ourselves to the assertion of this one fact: that where the study of nature, in its various phenomena, occupies the mind's chief attention; where there is the perpetual attempt to account for everything by some secondary, and that, perchance, a material cause; where the notion of matter absorbs that of force, and the trains of thought flow habitually towards the visible rather than the invisible, there has ever been a weakening of our ideas of God, of providence, of inspiration, of moral perfection, and of immortality hereafter. By the mere force of a mental habit, all our religious conceptions may be diluted without one of them being formally renounced; until, at length, the impression of them fades away, and they all sink together into oblivion.

These assertions, we fear, are exemplified to a very wide extent in the theological life of the present day. England is, at this moment, almost

entirely destitute of a spiritual philosophy ; for the few attempts which have been recently put forth to create one, have not as yet made any extensive progress, even amongst the more thoughtful of the people. Devoid, therefore, of this influence, and absorbed so largely in the practical, the minds, even of the educated classes, have everything to attract them to external interests, and almost nothing to lead them into the regions of deep spiritual reflection. It is useless to urge, in reply to this, that the people have pure religious principles inculcated upon them as a guide to the higher life ; for, however pure may be the system of religion that is presented, yet, if reflective habits are not formed and nurtured, religion itself will quickly assume the colouring of the medium through which it is viewed, and ritualism boldly station itself instead of penitence at the confessional, and instead of prayer at the altar ; yea, and will even mount the sacred desk in the place of holy intelligence, to defend a *system*, instead of contending earnestly for *truth*.

Ritualism, more or less, prevails in the present age amongst all communities ; a necessary result, indeed, of the absence of a spiritual philosophy. Even if there be in many cases sincerity enough, yet there is for the most part too little of the reflective, too much impatience at thinking beyond the leading-strings of custom or of sense, too weak a capacity of realising the spiritual, except in name, to resist its chilling encroachments. The tendency of the religious life amongst us is almost always towards outward combination. That is to say, men

rely upon *each other* in the battle of good against evil, instead of relying upon the might of truth to conquer the world. Christianity is thought to flourish in proportion as we can form societies, raise wealth to maintain them, and call together large masses of minds at once to express their joy, and feed their excitement. Little is it considered that *one mind*, going forth into the world, with an intense realisation of the spiritual, armed with the deepest subjective convictions of truth, and cherishing a calm, but piercing faith, instead of a vague educational belief, will do more for the Church and for the world, than a thousand minds valiant only for a system.

To these convictions many are unquestionably becoming alive. There is, we believe, a perception nascent throughout Europe, that Christianity is as yet too much on the surface, and too little absorbed by the intellectual nature of man ; that it has been too much an affair of education and profession, and too little *a great necessity* for satisfying the reason. As Catholicism was based upon the infallibility of the Church, so Protestantism has been based upon the infallibility of the Creed. Perhaps the next step in the historical development of Christianity may be that, in which both shall rally round the infallibility of absolute and eternal truth as developed in the Christian system, and leave all contention for the temporary and the relative to die away. To such a consummation the rise of a spiritual philosophy alone can lead the way.

Looking around, then, upon the philosophical

horizon as a whole, we can hardly fail to see that, in spite of all the objective character of the present age, the star of sensationalism is on the wane. Never had it appeared with such brightness as it did at the close of the last century, and the beginning of the present. In every country, however, the reaction has taken place. Germany is still idealistic; France has abjured its materialism; England is becoming divided between the philosophy of Scotland and Germany; and even in America, Locke has become well nigh obsolete. The effects of this reaction are now to be looked for in all the different spheres of mental activity; and oh, may these pulsations of the great spirit of humanity lead us ever nearer to happiness and to truth.

SECT. II.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Idealism.*

Few unprejudiced minds would now deny that idealism (we use the word in its broadest significance) occupies at present a proud position before the face of Europe. In one form or another it is enthroned in almost all the schools of learning where philosophy is studied. Glasgow and Edinburgh have both come back, with little exception, to the philosophy of Reid; and seem to be recanting the sensational heresy they began to imbibe under the impressive genius of Brown and Mylne. Cambridge no longer bows to the authority of Locke or

Hartley ; but, amidst all its devotedness to physical science, is evincing a manifest sympathy with intellectual philosophy, and clearly indicating that the tendency of many minds is verging towards the spiritual and the ideal. In the schools of France the power and energy of eclecticism, as developed in recent times, has turned the ideological system well nigh into a matter of past history ; whilst Germany, from Koenigsberg to Basle, is still advocating the most profound systems of idealism. To the attentive observer it is most evident, that there has been infused into European society a stronger faith in the spiritual than existed at the commencement of the present century. The reign of sense has begun to give way to that of reflection ; and it is now at least possible to bring out our thoughts respecting divine and supersensual things, even in a philosophical form, without being met with a smile either of pity or contempt. Literature has caught the radiance of these loftier conceptions, and poetry has found in them a field of delight, hitherto almost untried. Minds which could only relish the stimulating sensualism of Byron begin to feel that there is something which strikes a deeper note to the inmost soul in the poetic philosophy of Wordsworth. The influence of the flesh (to use a scriptural phrase), with its passions and instincts, is yielding to the might of the spirit. We shall proceed, therefore, to make a few observations in order to exhibit the present tendencies of idealism, as evinced in science, legislation, and religion.

1. And, first, with regard to science. Here the effect of metaphysical investigations is, perhaps, less readily observed than in many other departments of human knowledge. Science depends so much upon empirical observation and experiment, that our attention is almost certain to be directed to *them* as the chief agents in its progress. It should not be forgotten, however, that the method of scientific research is owing very little to outward observation, but almost entirely to philosophical thinking; and that upon the employment of the right method mainly depends all real success. In addition to this, it should also be kept in mind that the *fundamental questions* in physics always partake of an abstract or speculative character, which can be elucidated by no empirical process whatever. The influence of idealism, therefore, within the department of science, will be seen chiefly in the improved methods of investigation, and in the more accurate study and fuller elucidation of the primary ideas on which science itself is founded. To verify this experimentally, we must see if it be borne out by the facts, which the recent history of science has presented.

For this purpose let any one compare the writings of our living philosophers with those of the brilliant age of the French Encyclopædia, and say whether the contrast in this respect is not at once most obvious. Let him take down a volume of D'Alembert, and after that, one on a similar subject by Whewell, and then observe how much more fully

and satisfactorily the latter of the two has probed the primary conceptions of science, and how much more readily he draws inferences of pure reason from outward and visible things. The one generalises the objects of nature in their external relations, the other traces the phenomena around us to the primary conception, subjectively considered, from which they spring. To the former nature is exactly what it appears to the eye—a stupendous machinery ever proceeding onwards by regular and unerring laws ; to the latter it is a glorious mystery necessarily prompting us to the conception of spiritual agencies, which agencies are in fact only the “Indications of the Creator,” the varied forms in which a divine and spiritual power is diffusing itself through its own immense creation.

The importance of duly explaining the conceptions of science, and of drawing from the phenomena of the natural world inferences respecting the spiritual, is twofold. First, it is of no little value to the right interpretation of the facts which are adduced, that these conceptions should be clearly apprehended. This view of the case has been proved and illustrated by Dr Whewell, accompanied with a most copious selection of examples drawn from almost all the branches of natural philosophy. On this point, therefore, we shall not enter more fully at present, but refer the reader to the explanations he will find in the “Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences.” But, secondly, apart from all this, the influence of nature upon the human mind, *morally*

considered, is inconceivably altered when we view everything around us as replete with life, and that life divine. To our moral instincts, what avails a huge piece of unconscious mechanism, however perfect and harmonious? The idea of an eternal and irresistible necessity, however it may inspire us with awe, does not strike a single chord of our better feelings. But when this mechanism is recognised as the direct product of a mind or a personality like our own, when it is regarded as answering some great and beneficent end, as moving ever onwards to some vast destiny ; then, indeed, nature appears no longer dead ; she becomes replete with moral significancy ; she appeals to our deepest sympathies and feelings ; she is the very link that connects us with Deity itself.

From these observations we form the general conclusion, that the tendency which idealism exhibits in connexion with physical science, is to raise the idea of nature above that of mechanism, and to impart to it a *life* and a *soul*. Sensationalism views all the phenomena of the universe merely as a dull succession of changes. Idealism views them as the productions of a living agency. By the former, the conception of power as effecting change around us is depressed or disowned ; by the latter, it is raised to the prominence which it rightly demands.

Accordingly, if power be something real (though supersensual) we are almost necessarily led, by an ideal philosophy, to inquire into its origin and

nature. The *powers* inherent in unorganised masses—the *powers* of vegetable and animal life—the *powers* of passion and instinct—the *powers* of human intelligence—all become subjects, not of transcendental speculation, but of philosophical interest. We find, in them, so many secondary causes, more or less closely related to the one great first cause, from whom all existence is an emanation. And such deductions, it must be observed, fall strictly within the compass of science; they are rational inferences, drawn quite in accordance with the constitution of our own minds, and equally valid, in their origin, with the very axioms upon which induction itself is founded. Thus, by the application of idealism to the elucidation of science, we are introduced into a new sphere of discovery, at once of intense interest, and incalculable value.

In confirmation of these views, we appeal to the words of Sir J. Herschel, at a late meeting of the British Association. “The fact is every year becoming more broadly manifest, by the successive application of scientific principles to subjects that had been hitherto empirically treated, that the great work of Bacon was not the completion, but, as he foresaw and foretold, only the commencement of his own philosophy; that we are yet only at the threshold of the palace of truth, which succeeding generations will range over as their own; a world of scientific inquiry, in which, *not matter only, and its properties*, but the far more rich and complex

relations of life and thought, of passion and motive, of interest and action, will come to be regarded as its legitimate objects."

It is needless to say, that, upon sensational principles, such an extension of the objects of scientific research could never be realised ; on idealistic principles, however, it becomes, at length, inevitable. Although science, therefore, may be cradled in visible and empirical facts, yet, by the aid of reason, it infers the existence of other facts and other agents which lie beyond sense ; and, not content with this, it proceeds onward in its search, until all the secondary agencies are seen to converge in one centre, where is their common source, and that centre is God. Such, then, is the tendency which idealism exhibits in connexion with physical research—a tendency, which is indispensable to the full development of scientific truth, and still more so to its due influence upon the mind of man.

Great as may be the service of idealism, however, in the department of natural philosophy, yet it may easily overstep the mark, and transform a science of rigid induction into one of mere hypothesis. Its abuse, in this respect, has been quite as frequently experienced in the world, as its proper use ; and we should be far from faithful representers of its full tendencies, were we to pass by these errors unnoticed. The empirical extreme, we have seen, on the one hand, denies that the process of scientific investigation has anything to do, beyond the observation and classification of facts,—the idealistic ex-

treme, on the other, contends that facts may be altogether dispensed with, and that a whole system of natural philosophy may be erected upon purely *a priori*, or rationalistic principles.

Schelling's "Natur-Philosophie," and Hegel's development of the "Dialectic Process," are the most perfect instances we have of this extreme. In both cases, there is a bold attempt made to grasp the fundamental law of *being*, in its most general form; and then, by logical inference, to construct the universe. The law being either assumed or discovered, or said to be known by intellectual intuition, in the outset, the attempt is made to evolve from it the whole process and the whole product of creation itself. Now we would not deny, indeed, but that reason, when stimulated and directed by facts, may sometimes *anticipate* the results of induction, and rise, almost by a leap, at some law of nature. It was thus that Goethe, by *a priori* thinking, enunciated the doctrine of the metamorphosis of plants, and thus, also, that Oken, stumbling on a skull amongst the Hartz mountains, exclaimed, as though by a sudden flash of thought, that it was vertebrated; but certain it is, that purely rational systems of physics have failed to give any solid advancement to science, and that they could not even have been constructed, without the knowledge derived from those who have been willing to tread the slow but certain road of observation and experiment. The healthy tendency of idealism is, to give life to nature, by showing God in the midst of his

works ; the extreme of this tendency is pantheism—nature absorbed in Deity. Of these two different tendencies, the former is now manifesting itself, both in England and some other countries, gradually widening the bounds of science, and leading to its more recondite researches ; the latter is that which has excited so much attention in Germany, but which now appears to have passed its climax, and commenced its decline.

2. But we must now leave the walks of science, in order to seek the tendency of idealism, in the more practical department of legislation. We have already adverted to the three possible theories of government, based respectively upon the three fundamental conceptions of the human mind. Of these three theories, all the systems of mere expediency, however skilfully they may be adapted and expressed, are at once rejected, by an idealistic philosophy, as hollow and unsound. Idealism says, Man is not a mere animal, seeking the satisfaction of his instincts ; he does not regard corporal pleasure as the sole aim of his existence ; he does not look upon self-interest as the only rule of his conduct, nor upon physical force as the only motive to which we may appeal in matter of government. On the contrary, it protests, that man has a moral nature, cognisant of an eternal justice, whose laws are inviolable ; it asserts, that there is a supreme ruler of the world, the principles of whose government are sacred, and against which it is vain for man to vent his nostrums of fancied utility. In a word, it

declares that institutions are not to be adjudged right, because they may appear expedient, but that, relying upon the unerring sense of justice which God has implanted in our minds, they are to be adjudged as most assuredly expedient, because they are right.¹

That the idealistic principles of legislation are gaining ground in the present day, we entertain but little doubt. Coleridge (in the "Friend") was one of the first of the modern idealistic writers, who showed the application of a reflective philosophy to the subject of government ; and nowhere, perhaps, do we find the medium between expediency, on the one hand, and the vicious employment of reason, as the source of political institutions, on the other, more clearly pointed out, than in the first four chapters of his section on the principles of political knowledge. Albeit he gave, perhaps, too wide a scope to the doctrine of expediency in his politics, yet his entire rejection of it in the deeper principles of morals, (which are at the basis of all politics,) and the power with which he contended for moral truth, in its application to the exigencies of society, and the wants of human life—all this rendered him a worthy pioneer in the pathway of political reformation.

In speaking, however, of the politics of idealism, who does not at once turn to the erratic and versa-

¹ It is needless, perhaps, to explain, that we refer here only to the *moral grounds* of legislation ; the peculiar adaptation of these grounds must, after all, be determined according to the circumstances of the case.

tile genius of Carlyle? Let none suppose, that, because the works he has successively presented to the public contain no systematic statement of political principles, therefore there are no specific principles to be gained from them. So far from this, the philosophy of legislation blazes forth from almost every page. Nowhere, perhaps, are the profoundest wants of humanity, in its social state, probed with a firmer, yet tenderer hand—nowhere, the true remedies for social evil more clearly pointed out. In saying this, we do not render our unqualified assent to all the sentiments he has brought forward on this topic;—for who could ever do so without almost clothing himself in the author's own individuality?—but we mean to say, that he has dived down to those deep, and too often hidden sources, at the very heart of human nature, from which all sound principles of legislation must flow, and grasped the true theory of human society. If it be asked, in what respect, and by what means he has done this; I answer, by looking upon life in the light of an idealistic philosophy, and thus realising the fact, that men are held together, not by motives of self-interest, but by the spiritual laws of their common nature.

The two great ideas, of *Mind*, and of *God*—mind, in its intellectual developments and moral principles, and God, in his relation to the world—lie at the foundation of all his political theories. God is regarded as the source of all order—man, as the exemplar of God himself. What God has con-

stituted must be right and expedient ; and to know what God wills, with reference to human society, we have to study his law, in the moral nature impressed upon his image below. Strip society of all its embellishments, tear away all its artificial trappings, let the conventional and the unreal depart, and what then is left ? The answer is, *Man, as man*—man, with his original constitution—with his soul and his body, as God made them—with his divinity alone around him. Sensationalism would have us neglect this original constitution, and follow mere expediency as our guide. Idealism shows us, that it is vain to make artificial laws to rule mankind, while the very laws of our moral nature are violated, and set at nought. We look upon the political views of Carlyle as intensely significant of the tendency of the present age. Individual though they be, in their form, yet they are echoing the thoughts of a thousand minds, and the feelings of a thousand hearts. It is clear, that the reaction now experienced against sensational principles, is preparing multitudes to enter into spiritual views of human society, and, though such views may sound strange and mysterious at present, yet they will assuredly become, ere long, the practical truths, by which man's whole political life must be regulated.

Should any one doubt the truth of this anticipation, then let him look around upon all the chief political theories of the present age. Widely different as these may be, in many other respects, yet

they well-nigh all agree in rejecting the sensational principle, and appealing to the deeper elements of our nature. Take as example, the theory of Dr Arnold, (a man who was as little infected with the prejudices, and who as fully sympathised with the spirit of the age, as any great thinker of his time,) and however utopian some may pronounce it to be, yet who can deny, that he has taken many deep and truthful views of social life, such as would do honour to any country, and to any period? Take as another example, that of the modern Oxford politicians. What does Mr Sewell contend for, with his church-supported state? What, but a legislation, that shall apprehend man as a rational, a moral, and a religious being, that shall govern him through the medium of his faith in God, as well as through the outward penalties of human law? No matter whether his theory of a Catholic Church be right or wrong; dismiss, if you should think proper, his dogma of the succession, as being the mere war-cry of a party; still there is the idea—there the assertion, that nations cannot be governed by utilitarianism; that all law flows originally from God, and his moral creation in the soul of man.

Look, again, at the principles asserted by the politicians of the so-called "Young England" school. Listen, for example, to Mr Gladstone, in his eloquent strictures on the state-conscience and the state-personality, and see how firmly he asserts it to be the highest duty of Government to evolve the social life of man by moral and religious motives.

“There is, indeed, a doctrine,” he remarks, “that political society exists only for material, outward, and mere earthly objects: that it is a contrivance prompted by necessity for the defence of life and property, through the establishment of peace and order; that it is a formula for producing a maximum of individual freedom, by an apparent sacrifice, a small payment beforehand of the same commodity from each member of the community to the State. Here is the fulfilment of the declaration of Burke, that the age of economists, sophists, and calculators has arrived. Here is the twin-sister of that degraded system of ethics, or individual morality; the injurious legacy of Locke, which received its full popular development from Paley, and was reduced to forms of greater accuracy by Bentham: which, in logical self-consistency, sought to extirpate the very notion of duty from the human heart, and even to erase its name from language; and which made pleasure and pain the moral poles of the universe.”

All these phenomena, and many others now manifesting themselves in the political literature of our country, as we regard them, are but the expansions of the idealistic spirit of the age. True, they may gather church-principles, and other principles around them; but they are none the less the offspring of the deep conviction now settling in all thinking minds, that neither man nor society “can live by bread alone.” To what point these different phenomena may tend, it is not easy to foresee. We may securely hope, however, that the more reflec-

tion, the more humanity, the more real knowledge of the human mind, in its secret spring, is thrown into the political principles of our legislators, the less there will be of mere party-seeking and party-subserviency; and the more will the solemn office of the nation's rulers become too fearful a responsibility, to allow fixed principles to be shaken by individual interests.

There is only one extreme against which idealism has to beware, and that is, the state of things in which would-be philosophers, assuming that they have probed the human mind to its centre, take it upon them to enunciate fixed political axioms as the offspring of their social science—begin to exclaim that the age of reason is now to return, and, on the ground of their own philosophic infallibility, seek to overturn all the ancient landmarks of society. Such theories were rife throughout Europe during the stirring age of the French Revolution, and led many to views of political society as shallow as they were utopian. This extreme, however, being avoided, we can augur nothing but good from the application of a rational philosophy to the exigencies of social life.

3. It now only remains for us, in this section, to observe the influence of idealism upon the religion of the age. It has been already shown upon *a priori* grounds, that, under the reign of sensationalism, the religious life must become cold and feeble; and we have pointed out some actual facts which seem to bear out the conclusion. The natural inference

is, that some element of idealism is necessary to the proper expansion of theological ideas in the human mind. In strict accordance with this inference, we find, that, in a sensational age, the grounds, even of natural religion, are secretly undermined, as was eminently the case during the influence of the French materialism. On the other hand, it is by those chiefly, whose philosophy partakes more of the rational or ideal, that these grounds have been fenced and defended.

Writers, for example, like M'Culloch and Whewell, who have applied the highest scientific knowledge to maintain the validity of our natural religious conceptions, are, philosophically speaking, most evidently idealistic in their tendency; and we can hardly resist the inference, that it was by the same habit of mind, which led them to rise above the sensationalism so common to physical enquirers, that they were brought to gaze with such intensity upon the conceptions which form the basis of man's natural religion. The one set of thoughts is, indeed, very closely connected with the other. Science, when transcending the bounds of sense, must soon soar upwards to God; and the right being once admitted to adduce unseen agencies from the visible phenomena around us, there will soon follow, from the infinite design displayed in the universe, the deep conviction of an infinite designer.

The present influence of idealism, however, on this department of theology, not only tends to place the ordinary *a posteriori* argument in a clear and

commanding light, but it has added to this the force of considerations, which are derived from the constitution and from the instinctive conceptions of the human mind. Lord Brougham, in his "Preliminary Discourse," has dwelt excellently upon this part of the argument, in so far as the constitution of the mind is concerned; drawing from it proofs of design equally strong with any which could be selected from the external world. But, in addition even to this, there are some few writers, chiefly those imbued with German philosophy, who have begun to make powerful use of the argument derived from our *fundamental conceptions*. This method of proof certainly appears, to those unaccustomed to abstract thinking, somewhat obscure and inconclusive; but it has the merit of becoming more forcible the more it is inwardly realised; and we much doubt whether the tone of metaphysical thinking in our own country will not, ere long, render an appeal to these conceptions the most powerful, as also the most popular proof of the foundation-principles of natural theology. Such it has long become among the German divines; such, we believe, it will become everywhere else, when minds are no longer so sensualised, that its cogency is obscured and its moral strength invalidated. As we can imagine an angel in heaven to believe in God from its own deep intuition of his existence, so will men attain a similar intuitive persuasion, in proportion as they raise themselves above the material into the region of the spiritual and the divine.

But it is not merely upon the grounds of natural religion that idealism exerts its influence ; we may trace its tendencies with equal clearness in the effects which it produces upon the varied phases of the religious life actually existing among different sections of the Christian Church. It is a fact universally allowed, that there has been a great increase of spiritual vigour infused during the last ten years into the English Church. The cold, dry, lifeless formality, so common twenty or thirty years ago, has been broken in upon by some living operating religious ideas. Whether those ideas are right or wrong, in a theological point of view, is another question—still, there they are, touching the deeper springs of human nature, and rousing hundreds at the present moment to thought and emotion. Whence, then, have these movements originated? Not from the people—not from direct Christian effort—nothing of the kind : they have originated in a few minds, deeply imbued with an ancient, and, it may be, a mystical philosophy. These minds have revolted from a round of cold and stiff morality ; they have abjured sensationalism in metaphysics and in ethics ; they have scattered their idealism, clothed in different garbs, on every side ; and, as a consequence of this, they have roused the minds of thousands to a new religious life. True, it may be a religious life that combines much mysticism in its forms and its sentiments ; but it is no less the offspring of idealism, in its reaction against a mechanical age.

Look again to that community, which, as the professed nursling of Priestley and Belsham, was formerly the true representative of a sensational theology. However unwilling some may be to admit the fact, yet it cannot be concealed, that an idealistic philosophy, the natural antagonist of the Hartleian and all similar principles, has invaded their theological system, and is rapidly working a marked change in their whole religious life. Whether this change will lead to a fresh expansion of the elements of Christian faith, whether to pantheistic mysticism, or whether to religious rationalism, properly so called, it yet remains to be seen ; certain it is, that the sensational point of view must give way to *something more spiritual*, of whatever hue its spiritualism may be.

If we pass over from England to France, there we have a most instructive example of the working of speculative philosophy upon the religious life of a people. The close of the Revolution found France almost without a religion at all. Direct efforts to awaken religious faith seemed altogether unavailing. The Catholic and Protestant Churches were alike powerless to arouse the mass of the people from their lethargy and unbelief. Just at this point the eclectic philosophy came to their aid, and under its influence, the belief in God and immortality is again spreading among the people. We do not say that the religion of the eclectic philosophers is by any means a perfect one, or that it contains in it anything approaching to the whole of the elements

of Christianity; but still it holds up a God to be worshipped, an immortality to be secured, a soul to be inspired; and where these thoughts are impressed, there cannot be an entire indifference to religious truth and religious duty. Admit even that there are doctrines maintained by the eclectics which would disarm inspiration of its glory, that would destroy everything peculiar to the Christian scheme, that would place Christianity itself down under the same category with the religions of mere human invention; still this does not prevent the great ideas which they embody, from exerting an influence upon the mind, and preparing it for better things. It may, perhaps, sound harsh in some ears, but we firmly believe, that the spiritual philosophy of France has done more to bring back the people of that country to a sense of religious obligation, than all the direct efforts of Christian zeal combined. Such efforts are for the most part useless, where the conscience has become seared; where the belief in God has died out; where the hope of immortality has sunk into oblivion. Restore these thoughts to the people, and Christian effort will soon tell upon them with redoubled force.

Whilst idealism has been working beneficially for the religion of France, in Germany, on the contrary, its more extreme and daring features have unhappily developed themselves, in connexion with the religious life of that country. In our section on the German Idealism, we have already shown the vicious excess to which the rationalistic specu-

lations of the present age have been carried. Neglecting that vast and important element of our knowledge, which is derived from empirical observation, the philosophers of that school have endeavoured to lay down their *a priori* axioms, and then to draw after them in one immense chain of logical sequence the whole mass of human learning, whether of a moral or a demonstrative character. They have not been willing to tolerate anything whatever that is merely experimental, or even that includes an inductive process. Whether it be politics, art, natural science, or even history itself, all must be deduced from rational principles, and built up by deductive reasoning; so that we are even told what the past state of the world must have been, and what logically it must hereafter be.

This, then, being the spirit of their philosophy, it is not to be wondered at, that religion should be drawn into the same stream of logical inference, and pared down into perfect consistency with it; nor should it be an object of surprise that they have approached Christianity itself in the same spirit with which they have approached everything else. Intolerant of moral evidence, of experience, of testimony, they have swept away indiscriminately, in one torrent of logical argumentation, the historical, the inspired, the miraculous; that is, the whole objective element of Christianity; and have left nothing behind to supply their place, except the *a priori* religious conceptions of the human mind.

To see the folly of this procedure, as applied to religion, we only have to observe it in the case of other branches of human knowledge. Imagine all the labours of the historian discarded, and history itself only studied from the page of some speculative theorist; imagine the experience of the statesman set at nought, and a nation of living men, with all their clashing interests, governed by some logical hypothesis; imagine the experiments of the natural philosopher all neglected, and the phenomena of the universe deduced from rationalistic grounds alone; and we need hardly say that these glorious spheres of mental investigation would at once sink down into deserved contempt. And why would this be? Not assuredly because there are no *a priori* principles involved in these sciences, not because there is no room for deductive reasoning in them, not because they are exclusively experimental; no, but because there is an element of *fact* in them all, which must be observed and employed, before a firm platform is gained on which logical reasoning can rest.

So it is also in Christianity. While bare natural religion is a question of reason, Christianity is a question of facts. Leave out those facts, rest the whole system upon rational axioms or deductive processes, and Christianity, too, like the other branches we have mentioned, will sink down to a mere visionary and hypothetical system, proving at the very best but an excrescence and a useless appendage to natural theology.

And then, at length, what will natural theology itself become under the guidance of the same philosophy? Ask the extreme idealists of the present day, and they will tell you that God is one with the universe itself. The glorious conception of the great Jehovah, which we derive from the display of his wisdom, power, and love, in the creation without, the constitution of our minds within, and the intuition of our rational and moral nature, soon sinks down into a vague personification of the human consciousness. The final result of such a theology is, that the divine is dragged down to a level with the human, instead of the human being raised up (as it is by Christianity) to the divine. Thus, then, the extremes of sensationalism and idealism at length meet. The one says that God is the universe, the other that the universe is God. Diderot and Strauss can here shake hands, and alike rejoice in the impious purpose of sinking the personality of the Deity into an abstraction, which the holy cannot love, and which the wicked need not fear. Such is the extreme of idealism in its influence upon Christian theology, an extreme which contravenes and destroys all the good which at first it promised to effect. The German religious rationalism, however, it is pretty evident, has already passed its climax; the battle has begun to grow faint, and the first symptoms of decline have appeared. When *they* have begun to find repose, it is not altogether improbable that *we* may be in the heat of contest. That England, as well as Germany, must

pass through the ordeal of religious rationalism, we regard as a matter of more than probability. But, confident in the ultimate victory of truth, we shall rejoice in the conflict if it break away the shackles which still rob the conscience of its full and righteous freedom, and leave us a religion of manly vigour, that requires no arm to support it but that of its own undying energy.

SECT. III.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Scepticism.*

We have pointed out, in a former chapter, three subordinate species of scepticism, namely, the scepticism of authority, the scepticism of ignorance, and absolute scepticism. The first of these, moreover, we have shown to prevail chiefly in England; the first and second in France; the third (though to a small extent) in Germany. In looking upon the features of the present age as a whole, we should by no means come to the conclusion that it is marked by any peculiar tendencies to scepticism of either of these descriptions. So far from that, we think that the sceptical spirit which developed itself so largely during the last century, has during the present become visibly feebler; so that the feeling of the age, instead of tending to unbelief, is rather seeking after a faith of a more fixed and comprehensive kind.

In place of its being considered the mark of a

manly and penetrating mind to doubt what the rest of mankind receive as truth, it is now attributed more accurately to ignorance, or to pedantry. The common sense of the world has pronounced scepticism to be a reproach. Our readers will, of course, bear in mind that we are not now referring particularly to religious scepticism, but to the spirit of unbelief, or the habit of resisting evidence in whatsoever department it may be. A certain degree of incredulity, indeed, is manifestly advantageous to the interests of truth, inasmuch as it ever operates as a check upon false theories; but to carry it out in cases where evidence is clear, or to require demonstration when a cumulative proof only can be attained, is now pretty generally felt to be a perversion of our natural faculties, and a manifestation of folly altogether beneath the dignity of a wise man. We must attempt, however, to gather up the phenomena which scepticism is now displaying in connexion with the departments of science, legislation, and religion. In this way we shall be able better to see its present tendencies.

And, first, within the precincts of *science*, the influence of scepticism can now rarely enter. Time, indeed, was, when the philosopher not only had to encounter unbelief, but persecution as well. The day, however, has now gone by when mankind could persuade themselves that the sun moved round the earth, because some mitred head pronounced it to be so. Rome no longer sways the opinions of the learned, even within its own communion; the Va-

tican pretends not to supreme authority in philosophy; nor does the college of Cardinals assume the functions of a scientific institution. All scepticism of this palpable character has been swept away by the advancing lustre of demonstrative truth; and science now marches forward comparatively free from such obstructions.

The only instance in which scientific truth now meets with opposition is, when it runs contrary to some religious theory, and enlists that strongest of passions, I mean, theological animosity, against it. Geology has had to contend with a scepticism of this nature, by which many of its leading facts, and those, too, resting upon an evidence as palpable as the human reason could well require, have been rejected on the ground of their contradiction to some previous hypothesis. The motives which have given birth to such an exhibition of authoritative scepticism, we do not venture to impugn. They may have been very pure and very reverential; but quite assured are we that they have been very unwise. It never seems to be imagined by those who reject evidence of a convincing nature, on the ground of some prejudication of the matter in hand, that their own fondest and most sacred beliefs rest upon evidence of the very same kind.

I will suppose, for example, that a man rejects the antiquity of the crust of the earth, on the plea (though a false one) that it contradicts the Mosaic cosmogony. On what ground, we would ask, does he accept and hold so firmly the truth of the Pen-

tateuch? His faith in it must rest primarily upon testimony borne to certain facts, and then be confirmed by conclusions, drawn by processes of reasoning, from the facts presented. But this is precisely the evidence which the geologist brings to establish the principles he asserts. He presents, first of all, *facts* of which he himself and others have been eye-witnesses; from these facts he draws, *with great caution*, certain conclusions; and then, on the ground of the truth of the testimony, and the validity of the reasoning which builds itself upon it, he summons the belief of mankind. On what plea, then, does any man admit the evidence in the one case, and reject it in the other; or, if he repudiates the conclusion of the geologist, how can he complain if another repudiates that of the theologian? We see not that there is any superior clearness and certainty either with regard to the facts themselves or the reasoning based upon them, in the first case than there is in the second. To deny evidence blindly is always a dangerous thing to venture upon; for the right of denial admitted in one case may soon be applied to another; and the mistaken zeal of saving a theological truth at the expense of a philosophical one, may end in involving both in a common doubt or destruction. Where unquestionable evidence asserts two facts apparently contradictory, we must await a fresh apocalypse, natural or divine, to point out their reconciliation. Opposition to scientific conclusions, however, on religious grounds, is fast wearing away; men are beginning

to see that the same evidence cannot be regarded as a shadow in one instance, and a substance in the other.

Secondly, in the department of *legislation*, the scepticism of authority has also exercised some influence during the present century, tending in every instance to the maintenance of the principles of absolutism. It can hardly be wondered at, that after all the utopian theories of government, which France witnessed as the offspring of the Revolution, a reaction should take place, and all faith in human legislation be shaken. This reaction has led some in recent times to deny that the capacity of realising any sound principles of legislation exists in human nature, and has brought them to rest the whole fabric of political power upon the authority of God, as expressed through his Church. If we would see, therefore, the natural tendency of scepticism as it regards the theory of legislation, we shall find it most clearly exhibited in the present absolutists of France, of whom we have already furnished some account in a previous chapter.

The reason why scepticism should result in such a system, it is not difficult to account for. To live without government at all, every man would admit and feel to be an incalculable evil ; when, therefore, scepticism undermines the whole superstructure of political science, the only resource left is to take refuge in some divine command, and so to amplify the power of the keys as to embrace within it the whole authority both of Church and State.

The very same tendency, which we have seen developing itself in the principles of absolutism in France, has begun to prevail, to a certain extent, in England. Many hints have been thrown out, respecting the uncertainty of all political principles not based upon the authority of revelation. These hints, coupled with a lofty assumption of ecclesiastical power, have betrayed a secret desire in the minds of some to reinstate a spiritual despotism throughout the country. That this may never take place is devoutly to be hoped for. Experience sufficiently attests that national greatness and national prosperity can only result from carrying out those great principles of government, by which the interests of the whole people are properly balanced, regulated, and watched over. When power and property come irresponsibly into the hands of a class, to the degradation of the rest of the community, the violated moral laws will soon revenge their own unjust infringement.

With a spiritual despotism this is pre-eminently the case. However plausible it may seem in theory, to refer human power to the power of God as its source ; however excellent to put the government of the country into the hands of the professed guardians of religious truth, and intrust the chief authority to those who have to deal with the most potent influences of the human soul ; yet the history of the past sufficiently proves, that of all despotisms, a spiritual despotism is the worst ; that of all the tyranny under which the world has groaned, none

is so fearful as that which, not content with holding the body in subjection, binds the very soul in the adamantine chains of superstitious fear. The sceptic in legislation, however, may become a democrat as well as an absolutist; he may break down all the established principles of government and head a lawless mob; or he may set up an irresponsible power, in the form of a spiritual tyranny. But in the one case, as in the other, the distrust of rational political power leads alike to the most bitter consequences of anarchy and confusion.

To conclude this section, we must notice, thirdly, the tendencies of scepticism in connexion with *religion*. By scepticism generally, we mean the habit of distrusting evidence; this is the universal basis from which all the various forms of it arise. Distrust of evidence originates in various ways; most frequently, perhaps, in the following:—The confiding, unwavering, all-embracing faith of childhood is found, as life advances, to be partly deceptive: many instances occur in which its confidence is misplaced; and then the spirit of doubt begins to operate upon the mind, and to darken the bright atmosphere in which it first lived. Hence our faith in evidence sensibly declines; more especially in that kind of evidence which has been found to lead the mind astray.

Now, all evidence is generically of two kinds—it is either subjective or objective; it either comes from the soul within or from the world without; in other words, it is either the evidence of our own

faculties or that of testimony.¹ If, on the one side, our own faculties have led us astray by wrong conclusions, we are apt to have our faith shaken in their validity; or if, on the other hand, men have proved false or mistaken to us in their testimony, then we are apt to distrust testimony at large. This aptitude, whether it refer to the evidence of our faculties, or to that of our fellow men, when strengthened and developed in the mind, leads to what we term *scepticism*.

Our present inquiry, then, is simply this, "What will be the natural effect of distrusting evidence upon man's religious life?" The effect, it is manifest at first sight, will be very different according to *what kind* of evidence is received or what rejected. If both kinds are rejected, then the scepticism is universal, involving all human knowledge in one common destruction; if the evidence of our reasoning faculties is rejected, then revealed theology may still flourish, but with the distrust of all philosophical truth; or, lastly, if the evidence of testimony generally is doubted, then natural theology may live, but Christianity, historically viewed, will die. According to this deduction, therefore, the tendencies of scepticism, as it regards Christianity, are threefold. Either, first, it may attack and stifle all religious belief; or, secondly, it may admit the historical element (as a revelation resting upon testimony), while it denies the validity of the human

¹ Under the evidence of our faculties is included that of the senses and personal experience.

faculties ; or, thirdly, it may allow a natural religion, grounded on rationalistic principles, but reject the testimony which supports the truth of a revelation.

Of these tendencies, the two last are abundantly exhibited in the present day. In England, a distrust and contempt for reason prevails amongst religious circles to a wide extent : many Christians think it almost a matter of duty to decry the human faculties as poor, mean, and almost worthless ; and thus seek to exalt piety at the expense of intelligence. Delusive hope ! Is not Christianity itself a matter of intelligence ? Must not its claims to authority be weighed by the human reason ? Must not intelligence develop the germ of truth given us in the word, to a beautiful and comprehensive system to be realised in the world ? The ultimate effect of this species of scepticism can be nothing else than to strip religion of its energy, to turn the power of intelligent faith into a blind attachment to a creed ; and amidst all its zeal for revealed truth, to undermine secretly the very pedestal on which in peaceful security it reposes. The very same sceptical tendency is, at this moment, displaying similar features in France. What else is the storm, which is now raging against the philosophical instruction afforded at the universities of that country ? And what could show more plainly than this, that the scepticism of authority, if allowed to have its full sway, would not hesitate to hurl to the ground everything that could possibly interfere with the blind credulity, which in matters of testimony it

seeks to inculcate? How long this contempt for reason may continue, it is difficult to say; in our own country we believe it to be on the decrease; and from its final disappearance we look, not for any danger to Christianity, but for a fresh vigour to infuse itself into the popular religion of the age.

The third tendency of scepticism, that which assumes the form of a distrust for testimony, is far more widely extended in Germany than it is in our own country. The validity of reason is there seldom denied; in many instances, indeed, its province is made far too extensive, so that the historical element of Christianity is entirely absorbed in the rational. Such is the real nature of Strauss's hypothesis, of which we hear so much in the present day. The testimony upon which the historical authenticity of the Gospels rests, is there, by a combination of ingenious artifices, weakened and depreciated, the most competent witnesses are passed over as not strictly trustworthy, the outward fact is made more and more symbolical of moral sentiment, until, at length, the history is all transformed into mythology, and the moral element left, as the sole content of the written word.

Of the two phases of scepticism we have just described, we believe the one to be in the end equally injurious with the other. Distrust in one kind of testimony may very easily produce distrust in another kind; so that either phase may prove one stepping-stone to that universal unbelief, which involves all human knowledge in doubt and confusion.

The only method by which religion can attain its full bloom in any mind, is by an intelligent confidence, both in the validity of our faculties and the testimony of the past. The one must lay the foundation—the other must erect the superstructure of the religious life.

SECT. IV.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Mysticism.*

Mysticism, viewed simply in its principle, is built upon a true idea, namely, that there is in human nature a primitive faith which precedes and transcends reason. This faith, it is true, has been termed by Cousin *the spontaneous effort of reason*, and is thus identified with the other operations of our rational nature; but still the fact remains, that there is a truth-organ within the human soul, which leads us to certain beliefs, long before they can be verified by any logical or philosophical deduction.

Such an intuitive or spontaneous perception of truth frequently accompanies the exercise of the feelings and affections of our nature. The moral and social feelings, for example, necessarily involve some conceptions respecting human duty and human destiny, in which we may place confidence quite irrespective of the deductions of reason. In like manner, the æsthetic and religious emotions lead us to the contemplation of an infinite beauty, perfection, wisdom, and goodness, long ere reason has

begun to construct her argument for the being of a God. To a certain extent, then, we may put faith in the feelings, we may regard them as primitive witnesses for truth, in which we can repose confidence as long as their voice comes to us with clear and distinct articulation. On this ground it is, then, that mysticism professes to build; and it is the element of truth which it thus embodies, that has given it all its strength.

But whilst this is the case, there is great danger lest the authority of our feelings should be made too extensive, so that we should be led to mistake mere evanescent impressions for sober truths, and elevate the inspiration of the emotions altogether above the conclusions of reason. In fact, the sphere of knowledge in which we can trust these spontaneous impulses, is very confined; over the greater part of the domains of truth, the perceptive and the reasoning faculties must necessarily be predominant. Most of the branches of human science have to be pursued simply with a steady and logical precision; so that in their case the influence of feeling can do little else than produce error and confusion; in other words, can lead only to a false and bewildering mysticism.

To verify the truth of these remarks, we have only to follow the same course which we have pursued with reference to the other three systems; that is, to observe the influence of mysticism upon some of the principal departments of human investigation. First, with regard to SCIENCE, it might seem diffi-

cult to see where there could be any room for mysticism to operate in the case of investigations, which are so precise and definite in their character. It must not be overlooked, however, that science has its higher as well as its lower movement. The lower physics, those which refer simply to the classification of obvious phenomena, can hardly be subjected to any mystifying process; but the higher physics, those which tread upon the verge of ontology, and theorise upon the more recondite causes operating in nature, afford abundant material for the development of some of the most remarkable phenomena of mysticism.

Schelling, for example, although he began as an idealist, yet has introduced into his later productions a large element of mysticism; attempting, as he does, to give a theosophic view of nature in all her varied phenomena. He proposes to show, that nature is homogeneous with mind; that it is, strictly speaking, the self-development of Deity; that, in other words, it is the infinite objectifying itself in the finite. On this principle he enters into various explications of attraction, gravitation, light, heat, magnetism, electricity, &c., carrying on his theories into the different regions of creation, so as at length to afford a connected deduction of all the phenomena of organic and inorganic existence.

These theosophic views have been further developed by the pupils and followers of Schelling. Schubert has written the "History of Nature," beginning from the objective point of view, and tracing

it up to God, the soul of the world: Baader has begun from the *subjective* side; and, from the phenomena of mind, has inferred the order of the universe: while Steffens has united both sides in himself, and shown the absolute unity of nature and the soul. In all these writers, there is one prominent purpose exhibited—that of destroying the bare mechanical views of nature, which men have usually entertained, and showing it to be a living manifestation of mind; yea, to be nothing else than the infinite mind itself, in its various potencies and reflections. These philosophers, accordingly, imagine that the study of nature is only just dawning; that the time is coming, when, from our direct intuition of the soul of the world, in its original essence, the whole theory and phenomena of creation shall be fully explained; that all observation and experiment may be then dispensed with, and natural philosophy find its completion in the deductions of our pure reason.

The tendency of such a system can, of course, be no other than to discourage experimental philosophy, and to reduce physical science to a string of deductions, resting upon certain original principles, claimed to be intuitive. To the due employment of our higher reason, in the department of physics, we can conceive of no valid objection. Where conclusions can be drawn, in consistence with the laws of our rational nature, let us boldly draw them, though they should lead us into the depths of ontological speculation; but the admission of mysticism into

these regions, is something quite of a different nature. Reason, properly speaking, only erects its deductions upon observed and tangible facts, (such as that of the divine existence, from the marks of design displayed in the universe;) but the mysticism we have described *assumes* its foundation principles, and erects its superstructure upon them in such a manner, that the facts are made entirely subservient to the theory, instead of the theory emanating from the facts.

Mysticism, again, has made some few, and rather abortive efforts, to mould into a new form the principle and the details of legislation. Mr Greaves, to whom we have before referred, has attempted to found a system of spiritual socialism, by discovering the inward subjective bond, by which men are united in society, and seeking to strengthen this bond by moral or educational means and appliances. "The religious, moral, political, and commercial social arrangements," he observes, "have been based, from the commencement of society, upon the *modal* natures, instead of the *universal* natures." He proposes, accordingly, to look beneath the surface of humanity, down to the universal essence of which it consists, to draw forth into intense operation the love-spirit (as he denominates it), and, by these means, to lead men to dwell everywhere without the wants or wishes of wealth, without desire of individual accumulation, or any inequality of condition. Such were a few of the benevolent dreams of this philanthropic enthusiast. Happy,

indeed, would it be, if the love of self were to perish, and the world were to become united in the strongest ties of universal charity.

This consummation, however, we fear, is not to be attained by the mysticism we are now considering. We trust, indeed, that it may be attained at last ; but this will only be, when the visions of prophecy are fulfilled, and the spirit of true Christianity animates every soul under heaven. We need not particularly refer to the analogous doctrines of St Simon and Fourier in France, who have entertained similar visions of social perfection in the coming state of society. Far would we be from discouraging, even were we able to do so, any efforts of this nature to call forth the hidden sympathies of mankind towards each other ; but we see not why the ideas of human brotherhood, which are quite familiar to the mind of every right-thinking Christian man, should be dressed up in a strange and eccentric garb, and then propounded as some new system which is to regenerate society. We fully believe, that everything good, belonging to these doctrines, may be found in the social spirit of Christianity ; and that all which they contain beyond this, is the ebullition of an ardent but false enthusiasm, yearning after better things than society can now present.

It is in religion, however, that the tendencies of modern mysticism are chiefly visible. In this department there is, as we imagine, a true and a false mysticism—a true one, inasmuch as the direct

communion of the soul of man with the infinite gives rise to many phenomena, which it were vain altogether to omit—and a false one, inasmuch as there is a universal proneness in mankind to run into extremes upon all those subjects which excite their deepest feelings. To test the question, whether there be such a thing as a true mysticism in religion, we have simply to ask, whether our whole knowledge on this subject comes from reason and revelation combined, or whether there is not another element of truth, flowing from our spiritual feelings or our religious consciousness. The primary truths of natural theology may, of course, be viewed as deductions of reason; other religious ideas, again, come from an immediate revelation; but are we to say, that this exhausts our sources of religious knowledge? Is there not a direct communication of the human mind with the Divine? and does not this communion give us a deeper insight into the divine nature, than reason or revelation, or both of them combined, could ever afford? It is generally admitted, that the highest conception of Deity which our reason can form, is a very cold and abstract one—one which can hardly reach beyond the notion of a first cause, and with difficulty attain to that of an infinite personality; and even if we come to the page of revelation itself, yet all the descriptions which it gives us of the attributes of God, form but a very indistinct image upon a mind that simply puts these notions together by a logical process, and has no community of feeling with Deity

itself. If it be the case, therefore, that, for gaining a deep insight into the perfections of God, we must rise to a communion of the heart and sympathy of feeling with him, then there is in religion a true and valid mysticism, which has to be cherished in every mind that thirsts after God. Mysticism of this nature forms, in fact, a regular portion of the common belief of all Christian countries. The theological doctrine of divine influence is but the dogmatical mode of expressing a fact, which is almost equally evident on the principles of natural religion ; namely, that ere we can enter fully into the conception of God, both in his own nature and in his relation to the world, the spirit of man must be brought into mysterious communion and sympathy with the Spirit of God.

But there is also a false mysticism, as well as a true, to which we must for a moment advert. This is of two kinds. First, when communion with the divine mind is supposed to be gained by some artificial agency ; or, secondly, when it is supposed to be of such a nature, as to realise the full idea of inspiration. If a man assert, that, by the performance of certain outward acts, the human spirit can be united in sympathy with that of God, he advocates an incredible mysticism, inasmuch as he attributes spiritual functions to bare material causes. Or, again, if a man asserts that, by any means whatever, whether physical or mental, he has such an intuition of spiritual truth, that it completely transcends, and renders useless, the agency of his natural faculties,

he is likewise a mystic ; for he is laying claim to a species of inspiration, which is altogether foreign to our present experience in the world. We do not say, that he is laying claim to anything in itself impossible ; but we mean that inspiration, in this sense, is a phenomenon so extraordinary, that it must prove itself valid, by the most clear and unquestionable evidences ; in default of which, it can be considered nought but a deception.

Of these two species of false mysticism, there are many exhibitions in the present day. We doubt whether the whole doctrine of sacramental efficacy, as held by many sincere minds, is not accurately designated as a mysticism of the former kind ; inasmuch as it is all based upon the notion of a spiritual effect being communicated to the mind by an unconscious and objective instrumentality. So entirely foreign is this from the ordinary modes of the divine operation, in the worlds both of matter and of mind, that we need a proof sufficient to attest a miracle itself, to render the doctrine at all credible. With regard to the other species of false mysticism, namely, the pretension to, or belief in, a supernatural inspiration now enjoyed, we suppose it still lingers amongst the ignorant or the enthusiastic, and will only gradually expire, as the province of faith and of feeling in religion becomes gradually more accurately defined. Faith in the supernatural, we may safely say, can never die out of humanity, but will ever remain a standing proof of our connexion with a spiritual world. While this, how-

ever, is the case, we may well anticipate, that the progress of science, the further investigation of the laws of the human feelings, and the fuller conception of what is included in religious faith, will, ere long, bring the tendency to mysticism into its proper bounds, and curb the extravagance of superstition, without crushing our faith in what is spiritual and divine.

CONCLUSION.

THERE is one truth which the whole of our inquiries into the speculative philosophy of the present age is calculated to teach—namely, that the great question of philosophy is that of *method*. Upon the view we take of this one point, must depend nearly the whole influence we exert upon the real progress of human knowledge.

Amidst the vast variety of systems that prevail throughout the world in the present day, we may trace the features of four generic methods, *i. e.* of four grounds of appeal for the certitude of our knowledge. These four methods we may term respectively, the positive principle, the individual principle, the traditional principle, and the eclectic principle.

The positive principle in strictness ought to be regarded, not so much in the light of a philosophical method, as the denial at once both of method and of philosophy. Instead of attempting the solution of the great problems of human interest, it repels them: instead of grappling with the questions which every thinking mind asks with a trembling earnestness, it chides us for our longings, our

aspirations, our holiest hopes. Doubtless, it may claim some degree of definiteness and precision; but it is a definiteness and a precision, which arise from negation, not from solution; it owes its security simply to the fact of its going, like the serpent, upon its belly, and eating only of the dust of the earth. A philosophy that never soars, can certainly claim exemption from the danger of a fall.

We will suppose, however, nay, we will affirm, that there *is* such a thing as truth beyond the limits of the senses: on what then is its certitude grounded? There are two opposite answers, which are given to this question by the philosophies of the age. On the one hand, we are pointed to the *individual reason*, as the absolute source of all scientific truth. Our own consciousness, it is said, must ever be the final appeal. In whatever way truth may come to us, still reason must be the judge of its evidence, and the interpreter of its meaning. Whatever amount of truth may exist objectively, yet to us it can be nothing, until it is grasped subjectively by the understanding. Upon the validity, therefore, of the intellectual faculties, the whole ultimate certitude of truth must rest. Such is the position which the individual principle assumes in the struggle for truth.

Another and opposite system of philosophy answers the question above proposed, in an entirely different manner. The individual reason, it contends, is utterly untrustworthy. A man may ground upon his own subjective convictions any amount of

absurdity that can be imagined. Beside this, it is asked, what is the individual reason? A mere non-entity. Every man is but a portion of humanity—a link in the vast chain of being. His belief is not the result of his own individual constitution, but of the influences of the age in which he lives. Man, as an individual, is subject to the grossest delusions; neither at any time can human truth be any other than relative to the state and conditions of the understanding; so that, if we possess absolute knowledge at all, it must come from an objective source. This source is God. In the primitive revelation, in the Divine gift of speech, and in subsequent communications, there has been a direct outpouring of truth from Heaven itself. Here, then, it is said, is the ground of all certainty; here a species of knowledge, which is altogether raised above the delusions of the individual.

Now, that there is some amount of truth in each of the principles above stated, can be readily admitted. The intimations of sense, for example, though not the sole fountain of knowledge, as the positivist supposes, yet give the primary incentive to all the faculties, and furnish one very important element in our experience. The individual self, again, most assuredly contains the mould through which all the material of our knowledge must pass, ere it can be apprehended and employed—in a word, ere to us it can exist. But the individual self is still a portion of humanity, and can only confirm its own subjective convictions by an appeal to the

authority of other minds around it. Hence, then, arises the necessity and the value of eclecticism.

The term eclecticism, we should say, is here employed, *merely* through deficiency of some better and more scientific appellation, and in a sense very different from that of its more general use. We are desirous, therefore, in conclusion, of throwing some light upon it, when viewed as a philosophical method.

Eclecticism, in the sense we employ it, may be described as *the philosophy of progress*. Take any fixed philosophical method, and if it be in itself *complete*, it ought to give a complete result. If all truth, for example, can be eliminated from the individual reason, there is the same possibility of its being completed in one period of the world as in any other, because the individual reason—the me—abstractedly viewed, is the same in all ages. If there be *progress* in the development of truth, then there must be some principle out of and beyond the individual, which exerts its influence upon the human mind at large; that is, there must be some element, out of and beyond the individual, on which philosophical truth is partly grounded. The case is the same with regard to the principle of tradition. Here we have a truth, fixed and abiding, in which there can be no question of progress whatever. What has come to us verbally and objectively from above, can neither be further developed nor put into new relations, without admitting another, and that a human principle, by means of which the develop-

ment takes place. In fact, whatever fixed appeal we may set up as the ground of certitude, it can only hold good on the supposition, that philosophical truth is something fixed and abiding likewise.

History, however, shows us, that in human knowledge—*i. e.* in the comprehension and application of truth—there is perpetual progress. There is hardly a single subject, which is viewed exactly in the same light one century that it is the next. The universal field of knowledge being enlarged, all the particular portions of it are thrown continually into new relations.

Regarding philosophy, then, as progressive, what appeal can we have as final—what ground of certitude on which we can fully rely? We answer, that the one final appeal, and the ultimate ground of certitude in philosophy, is HUMANITY. Positivism gives us truth and error; the individual reason gives us truth and error; tradition gives us truth and error; but humanity sifts the results of individual thinking, and hands us down a stream of truth, ever widening as it flows onwards.

The philosophy we advocate, then, is the philosophy of progress; we see a providential plan in the development of society; under this plan, we see the vast edifice of human knowledge gradually perfecting by the labourers who are working upon it in all departments; and the solid material of which the edifice is composed, is *the catholic thinking of mankind*.

Were not the phrase pre-occupied, we might term

our philosophy the philosophy of common sense, that is, of the *sensus communis* of humanity. This *sensus communis*, however, is not any thing *fixed*, it is not made up of the mass of opinions which are held at any one given period ; but embodies that gradual unfolding of great truths and principles, by which the world's thinking rolls forward to compass its mighty results. Only admit that humanity is verily in progress, and it follows at once, that neither the individual, nor the common opinion of one given period, can represent the whole cycle of philosophical truth. The fixed method of one period becomes inadequate to the wants of the next, and thus shows us that we require a methodology, which can adapt itself to all the possible phases which knowledge may yet assume.

The method which appears to us best capable of supplying this demand, is that which we have now described, and which we have denominated eclecticism, or the philosophy of human progress. According to this method, the great aim of philosophy from henceforth, must be to accept the light of truth, whencesoever it may flow, to concentrate the rays it sheds around into one focus, and thus to bring the catholic thought of the world, in each succeeding age, into the region of pure idea. It has been well said, that the problem of philosophy is *common sense*. The actual material of which it is composed can be none other than the whole mass of truth which lies embodied in the thinking of every age ; and to the authority of the age alone

can we make our final appeal. The duty of speculative science, is to bring the truth of the age to light; to clear it of its *dross* and its symbols; to make it stand forth as plain, reflective, philosophic *knowledge*. Accordingly, the common mind and the individual mind have here each their department; the one furnishes the matter of our philosophy, the other may give it a form; the one offers us the truth, so far as it can be at present grasped, spontaneously, the other reduces this spontaneous apprehension to the character of logical science—to philosophy properly so called. Thus, while philosophy will be the last word which every age pronounces, it will furnish the forepost of observation, upon which the more advanced thinkers will stand to look forwards and discern the dim forms of the coming futurity. Doubtless the same speculative tendencies will be again and again reproduced, and upon some short-sighted minds may produce the impression that philosophy is confined within one eternal circle, out of which it can never free itself. But the mind which studies humanity aright, will see that its movement is rather that of the spiral, which, though making its perpetual revolutions, is ever tending upward towards a higher perfection, and pointing to Heaven itself as its final aim.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

Philosophy—Theology—Religion

THE few passing remarks on the above subjects, inserted in the text, have excited some attention. Several writers have expressed entire concurrence in the views there presented ; others, on the contrary, at least to some extent, have questioned their accuracy. Dr Tholuck, in a notice of the present work, inserted in the "*Literarischer Anzeiger*," has expressed his wish that the question between faith and science had been more fully elucidated ; and Dr Chalmers, in the *North British Review*, has reclaimed against our theistic principles, in favour of those contained in his own "*Natural Theology*." Under these circumstances, we need to make no apology for the additional remarks now inserted on a subject of such vast and universal importance. Our simple object in doing so is, to rescue the theology of our age from the weak position which we cannot but feel it has too often assumed, and place it upon a basis that is less assailable by the shafts of scepticism. As the word *philosophy*, when used in connexion with religion, is so apt to be misunderstood, we shall for the present lay it entirely aside, and attempt to reduce the question to its simplest terms.

It will be admitted, in the outset, that we have *minds* ; that these minds have a given constitution ; that by virtue of this constitution we are adapted to perceive certain truths, and to exercise our faculties upon them. The problem, then, to be solved is *this*. How far do we owe our theological belief to the nature of our constitution, and the exercise of our faculties ; and how far to a direct objective revelation ? in other words, What part of the proof both of Theism and of Christianity comes from the one source, and what from the other ? Only let us premise, that we leave the question of *Religion* for a little

entirely in abeyance, and direct our attention simply to that of *Theology*—that we are not now to search into the origin of our devotional feelings, but simply of our theological ideas and principles.

Now, the whole question of theology must *begin* with the evidences we have of the being of a God : this is the foundation truth on which the whole reposes. Respecting these evidences there are three hypotheses we may assume. 1. That the being of God is purely a truth of revelation. 2. That it is a truth, which rests partly on natural grounds, and partly on revelation ; or, 3. That it rests in its last analysis *solely* upon the light of nature. The abettors of the first hypothesis view the human faculties as erring and untrustworthy, and appeal to revelation as the ultimate basis of all fixed and *eternal truth*. Those who accept the second hypothesis, admit the validity of reason on the whole, but consider the aid of revelation necessary to complete the full strength of the theistic argument. Among these, we reckon the eloquent critic of the North British Review. Those who take the last hypothesis, view natural theology as the necessary basis of all revealed truth.

With the first class of these reasoners we have now but little to do. There are very few among those that bear the name of Protestants, who deny the validity of reason altogether. Theologians of this class belong almost exclusively to the Roman Catholic Church, who find it convenient to decry reason, in order to force us into the arms of *tradition*, as the only ground of human certitude. To these, natural theology is a nonentity ; it exists not in any form whatever ; all human belief is an affair of tradition, handed down from a primitive or some posterior revelation. We may let this theory, then, stand at present *hors de combat*.

We come, then, to the second hypothesis, viz., that the evidence of the being of a God rests upon grounds partly natural and partly revealed. And here an objection arises in the outset, against the hypothesis in question ; namely, *that the truth of the Divine existence is absolutely necessary, in order to establish the authority of revelation*. Take the evidences of revelation one by one, and it will be found, that they each and all go upon the presumption of the existence of a God. What are the internal evidences but representations of the fact, that the doctrines of Christianity are all in perfect consistency with the highest conceptions we can form of the Divine character ? Leave the existence of God out of the question, or imagine yourself talking to an atheist, and of what use are all the appeals you make to the purity, excellence, and Divine grandeur of the Holy Scriptures ?

These considerations do not prove the *being of a God*; they only show that on the previous admission of his existence, the sacred writings bear internal marks of coming from his Divine mind.

The case is the same with regard to the external evidences. What is a miracle to a man who has no notion of or belief in a God? If the universe could come by chance or fate, surely any of the lesser phenomena termed miraculous, might occur so too. We do not question, indeed, but that miracles may rouse the moral nature and draw attention to divine truth; but, *logically*, if the whole universe can exist without a maker, miracles cannot prove the contrary. In a word, the whole authority of revelation is derived from the fact of its coming FROM God; consequently, its authority cannot be appealed to as an evidence for the existence of God. To make the credibility of revelation rest upon the authority of God, and the being of God upon the authority of revelation, is as complete an instance of a vicious circle as could well be imagined. If it be said that the whole of the histories of the Old and New Testament exhibit the marks of a Divine hand in connexion with the welfare and moral education of man, I admit it. But this proof does not arise from the *authority* of revelation as such, but simply from the historical facts recorded. The religious history of mankind may certainly be used as a branch of the theistic argument; but to argue from the facts of history wherever recorded, is as purely logical a process as to argue from any other facts whatever. The case is the same, when we appeal to the Bible as a witness of the fact that the world had a beginning. If we want to employ this fact as a step in our argument for the being of a God, and against the eternity of the universe, we can only appeal to the Bible as *history*: to appeal to it as authority on this point, supposes the previous knowledge of a divine Being from whom that authority is derived. And thus twist about the evidences of revelation as we may, they cannot prove *that God is*; but are simply adapted to show us that Christianity came from a Being, of whose existence and attributes we have a previous conviction.

Thus, then, we are thrown entirely upon our third hypothesis; namely, that the proof of the Divine existence, in its last analysis, lies entirely within the province of natural theology.

Before we proceed to develop the line of argument we should employ in establishing the existence of God, let us take a passing glance at the nature and purport of natural theology. The aim of natural theology is not to give us the *knowledge*, but to give us the *science* of God. Our knowledge of God as a part of our personal history may

come from a variety of sources. We may believe in God from tradition, from the Bible, from our feelings, from many other causes. But natural theology, originating as it does after we have the knowledge of God as a practical belief, seeks to render an account of that knowledge, to justify that belief, to bring the whole matter into the light of scientific or moral truth. To do this, it must construct, as it were, the very *idea* of God : point out *how* it originates in the human mind, and show how far it is objectively valid. It is necessary carefully to guard this distinction. We are often told that we must look out upon the universe, or study the page of revelation, or consult our religious affections, in order to find God. All this may be true, as regards our personal convictions, while yet the real scientific proofs may lie in another direction. Natural theology does not preach, or appeal ; it simply *reasons*. It does not aim *directly* at a moral effect, but only at a logical conclusion.

Another point to be carefully attended to is *this*, that we do not start with the supposition, that the *idea* of God is already found and agreed upon. This is an error lying at the threshold of almost all the natural theology which our recent literature has produced. Our writers look around upon the laws and dispositions of matter, and finding there the evidences of *design*, exclaim, lo ! here is *God*. True enough, but they had gained their conceptions of God from other sources ; they had taken some theistic notions, derived perhaps from the age, or from their own minds, or still more probably from Christianity, and attributed the design manifested in nature to *this Being*. To do so, however, is manifestly an illegitimate and totally illogical process. The problem is, to find God, to deduce the true idea of the Deity, to lay aside all previous *conceptions*, and show how we arise step by step up to Deity itself. When we see design in nature, all we can say is, that there is a designer, or some designers : we are not to seize upon our previous traditional or spontaneous belief, and say we have proved the existence of God *in this particular sense*. Natural theology, we repeat, implies a logical procedure ; it demands that we take nothing before received for granted, that we lay aside every previous conception, that we render a scientific account of *what* God is as well as a proof of the fact *that* he is. Strictly speaking, indeed, the former process is necessary to the latter ; for to prove *that* God is, is proving nothing at all, unless you show the *notion* we have to attach to the term itself. Until this is done, the word *God* may mean fate, or chance, or power, or a mere demiurge.

In this respect, there is an entire want of parallelism between the

case, in which, from seeing a watch, we infer some human constructor, and the case in which, from seeing the universe, we infer a God. In the former instance, we have previous experience of the agent *man*, and at once attribute the work to an agent of this kind: in the latter instance, we have no experience of the agent *God*. We have, therefore, to gain the *conception* of him as well as prove his objective reality. Real parallelism between the two cases would imply a question of this kind. If I were a pure disembodied spirit, and having never known what man was, had to derive my knowledge of him from his works, how much could I deduce respecting his nature from contemplating a watch? I should be obliged, of course, in such a case, to *construct* the conception of such an agent from the qualities of my own mind, to rise from the known to the unknown, from the agency I find in myself to that which I am now called on to suppose in another. So it is also with regard to God. The very proofs which substantiate the divine existence, have also to furnish us with our conceptions of the divine nature: and, consequently, no proofs which do not carry with them the complete type of that divine nature, are competent, *single handed*, to raise our minds to God.

The argument of natural theology, then, is a very complex one. Every part of the creation, external and internal, brings its contribution to it. Instead of attempting to deduce the existence of the Deity from one, and that the very lowest region of observation, namely, the region of matter, we endeavour to build the argument up step by step, employing every species of proof, until it attains a cumulative force, before which the sternest scepticism must be swept away.

First, then, let us look out upon nature. What do we see, gazing on it *outwardly*? The answer is, *mechanism*. As the mechanism of a watch irresistibly suggests a maker, so the mechanism of the universe equally suggests a cause. We do not define yet of what nature the cause is: let it be *fate*, let it be *chance*, let it be anything you please, still it must have been *something*. If a man be found murdered by the way side, there is no need of beginning the evidence in a court of law, that some one or something must have committed it. So in the case of the world, there is no need of bringing any proof that there has been some *cause* or *causes*, which have brought it into its present state. If it have existed from eternity, the cause or causes must have operated from eternity. Even those who speak of fate, as their God, must mean, that *something*, *i. e.* some power or other, is signified under the word *fate*. The only thing we have to do is to examine the *effect*, and see if from it we can learn anything respect-

ing the cause. Now, the moment we come to ask respecting this cause *qualis sit*, we begin necessarily to argue from the only instance of direct efficient causation with which we are acquainted, namely, from our own minds. And probably the most immediate idea which men unschooled in reflection, and accustomed simply to converse with nature, would form of the world's cause, is that of a being like themselves, or more probably of a hierarchy of human Deities. No one will affirm, that the earlier ages of the world were destitute of any searchings after God. So far from that, everything in the mythical period was wondrously gilded with the divine. The only thing to be noticed is, that men in those ages conversed mainly with nature; that they formed their conceptions of the *numina divina* without much reflection, and chiefly from nature; and that the argument from this source resulted more commonly than not in polytheism. Can we say that the process was illogical? I think not. Confine our view to nature only with its endless variations, and what is there unnatural in admitting the whole hierarchy of Olympus? Nay, history and present experience prove, that under such circumstances the polytheistic hypothesis is by far the most acceptable to the human understanding. Even on this ground, however, the chief share in the argument is derived from the mind or the consciousness. The irresistible belief we have of causation is a primary law of our consciousness, and the first attempt we make to hypostatise the cause of the universe around us, is the transference of our own forms of intelligence and our own personality into the conception of that vast architect, or hierarchy of architects, by whom the world was constructed. The theistic argument, then, in which the appeal to nature is the prominent feature, ends at best in the idea of a *Δημιουργος*.

But, now, we enter upon another process of reflection. The universe presents to our view innumerable objects, which are finite, changeable, and dependent. All of them consist of certain forms and attributes, united to a substance or substratum. But substance, in its finite and dependent form, cannot be self-existent; for it has come into that form from a previous state, *i.e.* has been brought into it by a prior cause. Go backwards accordingly in the chain of causes, and you come at last to an absolute cause. There must be, therefore, something previous to finite existence which we call *Being per se*, something which is self-existent, underived, absolute, eternal. Under all the fleeting appearances which nature presents, there is something *abiding*, which reposes alike at the basis of all—a Being which passes not away with her changes. Here, then, is the dawn of the *in-*

finite, upon the human mind—an idea which is soon reproduced in numberless different forms. Think of *space* :—we see it stretching out beyond the world, beyond our system, beyond the furthest limits of creation ; and every bound we affix to it only carries us to the unbounded beyond. Think of *time* :—all the limits of duration do but suggest the illimitable eternity. Think of *dependent existence* :—and we sink lower and lower from one stage of dependence to another, till we rest only in the independent, the absolute. Think of *finite being* :—what is it but an endless paradox without infinite being ? Think of *cause* :—what does it end in, but the *causa causarum*, the spring and source of all things. The idea of the infinite is necessary, absolutely necessary, to perfect the full conception of God. But this idea comes not from without. We can never see, we can never have any experience of *infinite being*, and yet this is a *positive* idea, an idea of which we feel the reality and necessity : yea, without which, all being were but a paradox. The *finite* is really the negative idea : *it only* comprehends limitation and negation, a limitation which is universal within the regions of our sensuous knowledge. But reason, taking its start from the finite, brings us infallibly to the infinite : and inasmuch as two infinities involve a contradiction, it finds here the proof of the *unity* and the *eternity* of the first great cause.

Nature, then, gave us a demiurge for a Deity : reflection now asserts his unity, infinity, and eternity : and we have thus before us the *absolute Being*, without which all thought, all creation, all nature, would be involved in one inexplicable contradiction. As polytheism was the prevailing sentiment under the former conception, so pantheism appears to be on the whole the prevailing result of the second or metaphysical stand-point. But if there be any such thing as truth at all, if there be any common principles on which the human reason can rest, then assuredly the universe has a ground, or cause, and that cause is self-existent, absolute, infinite, eternal.

But again, we rise into another region of proof, and that is *the moral*. The only *personality* of which we have any direct knowledge, is that of our own minds. We must take mind therefore as a field of observation, as a created effect, and see what we can learn from this effect of the infinite cause. Humanity is not *self-created*. The reason we possess is not constructed by us out of a state of unreason. If, therefore, it is implanted in us, then the being who implanted it, the creator of the spirit, must *himself* possess reason. So it is with our moral sentiments. If there is a law of right and wrong engraven upon our constitution, there must have been a lawgiver. All the ap-

peals of innocence against unrighteous force are appeals to an eternal justice, and all the visions of moral purity are glimpses of the infinite excellence. In a word, if we see in nature, in mind, in history, if we see in every region of the divine operation, intelligence adapting means to an end ; if we see moral sanctions expressed and implied in the natural tendencies of human action ; if we see all this moreover effected by a supreme intelligent *power*, that is, a divine *will* ; then from the conceptions we have of intelligence, moral sentiments, and will, as existing in our own personality, we are constrained to regard the being from whom they all flowed as himself a personality, in which all these attributes exist in their fulness and perfection. And then, at length, when we have once attained the idea of a divine personality, we may go back again through all the realms of nature and existence, and gather new delight from the infinite illustrations of power, wisdom, and goodness, which they perpetually show forth. Thus it is, that the teleological, the ontological, and the moral arguments, blend in one, and mutually support each other. To extort from nature alone, a complete proof of the divine personality, is throwing ourselves into a false position, and weakening our argument by making it prove too much. That nature has a *cause*, every one who speaks intelligibly must admit. The main object of the ontological argument, is to prove that this cause is infinite, self-existent, *one* ; while that of the moral is to prove that he is intelligent, holy, free.

Having arrived at this point, we have wherewithal to ground our belief in the authority of revelation. The internal and external evidences can now both appeal to the power and purity of the Divinity ; and then, its claim to the title of a divine message being once established, revelation can carry us onwards in our conceptions of the divine nature, to a still loftier elevation. Thus revelation, while useless at the basis, may yet become the crowning piece of our natural theology. Give it but a pedestal to rest upon, and it may lead us into the loftiest regions of divine knowledge, which are accessible to humanity in its earthly state. Such is the brief outline of what we regard to be the true nature of the theistic argument.

Were we required to point out the region in which the whole argument is best concentrated, we should refer to *man*, as himself a living embodiment of all the evidences. If you want argument from design, then you see in the human frame the most perfect of all known organisation. If you want the argument from *being*, then man, in his conscious dependence, has the clearest conviction of that independent

and absolute *one*, on which his own being reposes. If you want the argument from reason and morals, then the human mind is the only known repository of both. Man is, in fact, a microcosm—a universe in himself; and whatever proof the whole universe affords, is involved *in principle*, in man himself. With the *image* of God before us, who can doubt of the divine type?

Having proceeded thus far with our theistic principles, we may attempt now some few further adjustments with the “Natural Theology” of the “North British Review.” The eloquent author of the critique before referred to, handles with some severity the principle of Cousin—that we must find the infinite, the absolute, the self-existent one in the depths of our own consciousness; and quotes against him his own previous principle of pure spontaneous apperception, as being contradictory to it. “Pure spontaneous reason receives its light direct from heaven; it looks up, and the beams of eternal truth, in its objective reality, fall clear and unsullied upon it. This being the case,” says the reviewer, “why should we seek for God in the depths of our own psychology: how can the reflection be brighter than the primary effulgence?”

I confess it was somewhat surprising to me, that so able a metaphysician, in making this objection, should have entirely overlooked the distinction between our primary and spontaneous knowledge of God, and theology which is the science of God. Surely we do not require natural theology, as a science, to give us our first conceptions of the Deity. I might, if this were the case, with the same reasonableness, inquire whether the reviewer himself could find the infinite and absolute being among the eyes and claws of animals, or the fossil remains of the lower geological strata, or any other of the regions of nature, which he traverses in search of the teleological dispositions of matter. What we are required to do in natural theology, is to render a *scientific account* of our belief in a God; and the question here, accordingly, is not *whence* we have the first spontaneous glimpse of the Divinity, but how we can establish the truth of his existence on a clear and *reflective* basis. Our reviewer, we apprehend, traverses nature, not to find God, but in order to render a scientific account of his belief; we traverse the regions of psychology for the same purpose.

To render this account, the spontaneous apperceptions of the mind, *viewed alone*, are useless: they can have no scientific value about them, just because they *are* spontaneous and not reflective. The use of psychology is to give them a *reflective* value; to prove that they

are not mere subjective delusions, but a veritable light from heaven. This is, in fact, the very point which M. Cousin is establishing in the passage quoted, and, alas! misunderstood by the reviewer, when he (M. Cousin) says, that "within the penetralia of consciousness he had succeeded in seizing and analysing the instantaneous but veritable fact of the spontaneous apperception of truth—an apperception which, not immediately reflecting itself, passes unperceived in the depths of the consciousness, *yet is the real basis of that, which later, under a logical form, and in the hands of reflection, becomes a necessary conception.*"

Theology, as the very termination *ology* implies, occupies itself solely in the reflex and logical; and it is for this reason we affirm, that we must seek for its basis in the depths of our psychology. Take the instance of beauty, as an illustration. We have a spontaneous apperception of the beautiful in nature or art. To find the beautiful, of course, we need no psychology; but is it possible for us to ground the theory or science of beauty, except upon the basis of psychological principles? So is it in natural theology:—to establish the principle of causation, upon which the whole *a posteriori* argument depends, is an affair of psychology; to find the scientific use and value of our pure spontaneous apperceptions, is an affair of psychology; to furnish the logical explication of the manner in which we rise from the idea of our own personality, to that of the infinite personality, is an affair of psychology; in a word, take away psychology, and though we may feel the presence of the Infinite Being, and love him still, yet we can have no theology, no scientific basis for our belief. Nature alone can never give us the infinite; and how are we, therefore, to ascribe infinity to the Deity, unless we show, *philosophically*, that our spontaneous perception of the infinite is grounded in real scientific truth.

This leads us to another very important adjustment, on the relation between natural theology and revelation. It is evident, that we may assume our spontaneous conceptions of Deity as unquestionable, and be content to go with them to the establishment of the evidences of revealed religion. In this case, our system of revealed theology may undoubtedly *appear* to stand apart from, and independent of, the conclusions of natural theology. But who does not at once perceive, that in this process there is an entire want of logical consecutiveness? We take an unscientific formula, and upon that we ground a scientific argument for the truth of revelation. We accept a mere spontaneous impression, and on its authority we ground a theology, *i. e.* a reflective science. That the spontaneous and unscientific apprehension of

truth is the original *matter* on which the whole of our theology must be based (just as our perception of the beautiful is the basis of all our scientific æsthetics), we fully admit : but we have no right to use it for scientific purposes, until it has become *reflective* truth. If we pretend to construct a theology at all, we must proceed logically, from the very first principles to the summit of our last conclusion.

On this ground, therefore, we affirm, in the name of all clear and consecutive thinking, that natural theology is the true and the only true basis of revealed theology. To build the authority of revelation upon the idea of God, as furnished by the spontaneous light alone, may serve well enough for moral purposes : nay, for aught I know, we might convert the whole world to Christianity, without proving a single doctrine it contains, or even vindicating the truth of its evidences. But if we aspire to *a theology*, the logical procedure cannot for a moment be dispensed with : we must prove our ground as we advance, and leave nothing behind, which can give occasion of offence to the sceptic himself. To do this, we are bound to begin by rendering a due account of our spontaneous apperceptions, of our doctrine of final causes, or of any other principle upon which man is compelled to admit the validity of his primary beliefs. Accordingly, we must establish the philosophical value of our primary theistic conceptions by the light of a searching *psychology* : and it is only when we have laid firm our basis in the inviolable depths of the human consciousness, that we can proceed to build up the noble superstructure of a *sound theology*. Unless these principles be established, theism fails of a scientific foundation : and theism thus failing, natural theology has not its primary idea, and revealed theology is wanting in the very conception which gives it all its authority and all its power. We affirm, therefore, that all theology, whether natural or revealed, like everything else which appeals to *argument* for vindicating its truth, must be grounded in the *data* of our consciousness, and the exercise of our faculties. To deny this, is to deny the right of appeal to the human understanding in such matters at all : it is to sacrifice the very idea of having a rational basis for our religious belief : it is to give up the possibility of a theology properly so-called, and set the whole of our theological conceptions afloat upon the uncertain ocean of mere feeling, or of human tradition.

This conclusion is evident, not only when we turn our attention to the conception of a God as the *foundation* of all theology, but equally so when we consider many other of the conceptions which the truths of revelation involve. Revelation comes to us in the form of *words* ;

these words, in order to convey to us their *full* meaning, must be *fully* understood. But how can this full understanding be attained? Experience alone is sufficient to tell us that the ideas which are embodied in many of the words and expressions of revelation, can only be adequately comprehended, by means of the progress we make in moral thinking at large. Will any one say that the scriptural idea of human brotherhood has been comprehended through the eighteen centuries of Christian teaching which have enlightened the world? As society advances, and the principles of justice between man and man become gradually established, do we not find that the whole is contained in the spirit, aye, and in the letter of Christianity, but that the moral thinking of the world was not sufficiently awake to see it? Fifty years ago, did our fathers see slavery cursed in the Bible? Or ten years ago, would any one have dreamed of quoting scripture against the spirit of monopoly? So it is with all the other great subjects of moral interest. The idea of creation, of providence, of human freedom, of moral evil, of retribution, aye, and of spiritual regeneration, all of them involve *conceptions*, which can only be evolved into highest brightness by the intense application of the *reason* upon them; that is, by the co-operation of *philosophy* in the elucidation of divine truth. We find, then, two important relationships which philosophy bears to theology; first, that it must afford it a scientific basis: and secondly, that it must clear up to us the great primary moral conceptions which revelation involves, but which it leaves us to investigate and develop.

Are we then, it might be said, to regard philosophy as the basis of all *religion*? I answer, far from it. Theology and religion are two widely different things. Theology implies a body of truth, founded upon indisputable principles, and having a connexion capable of carrying our reason with it, running through all its parts. Religion, on the other hand, is the spontaneous homage of our nature poured forth with all the fragrance of holy feeling into the bosom of the infinite. Religion may exist without a theology at all, properly so called. We may never have attempted to render account of a single theological idea; we may never have stepped out of the region of our purely spontaneous imaginations; we may be destitute of the least notion of the grounds on which our belief rests, and yet the deepest waters of our religious being may be stirred by the divine impulse upon the soul, and lead to all the noble results of a living and entire devotion to God. And here we see the power of *the word* in its progress through the world. It comes not with any philosophical pretensions, it claims not to show us the grounds of our belief in God

and Eternity : but it comes, all replete with the pure, the holy, the divine. It appeals not to our logical consciousness, but speaks at once to the religious nature, or, as we more often term it, to the *heart*. Scepticism existing, as it ever will, till the visions of prophecy are fulfilled, demands at our hands a *theology* which shall stop the mouth of sophistry and contention : but, ah ! the world at large, grovelling in the dust of the earthly, the sensual, and the devilish, needs not so much a theology, as the deep inward stirrings of that religious nature, which every bosom contains as the heritage of heaven, until the spirit is mastered by the flesh, and the better feelings hurried away and lost in the torrent of imperious and irresistible evil.

Since the above note was written, the spirit that dictated the sentiments on which we have commented, has gone to its eternal rest. It may be interesting to some of the survivors to know that the views above expressed were communicated to him, though in a very brief and imperfect form, by private correspondence, and that his mind to the last was actively engaged in developing the principles of the knowledge we may attain of that Divine being, whom he was so soon to adore in the higher world, and on whose eternal love he is now reposing. The following is an extract from his reply, dated April 30, 1847 :—

“ I should have replied much sooner, but I have been much engrossed, and often unwell. I read your letter with the greatest satisfaction. I must confess that if you once admit the reality of the conception of a God, and also that the proof subsequent to that point is successful, it is all I care for. I do not in the least object to the speculation as to the origin of the conception. Enough for me that the starting post is there, however it may have been set up. You will allow with me, that the conception is a very general one ; and if an unexceptionable argument can be grounded on its mere existence for the objective reality of a God, I seek no further. I would lay no interdiction on the attempt to trace our mental processes backward from the conception to its earlier rudiments. But this anterior process, or rather the description of it, forms no part of the proof for a God, which is grounded exclusively on the existence of this conception as a mental phenomenon, and not on the causes whence it took its rise.” Great as is the loss to private friendships and affection of so noble a mind and so loving a nature as was that of Chalmers, greater still is that which has been sustained by the Church and by the world. Breathing as he had ever done the atmosphere of his country’s philo-

sophy and theology, our admiration was only so much the greater to see his soaring mind ever ready to burst beyond the limits of mere nationality, into the broad catholicity of human thought. Too soon is he removed from a sphere in which his influence was at once so extensive and so deeply needed. Had another ten years been added to his life, with all the fresh associations which were flowing in upon it from the literature of Europe, with that lofty impartiality which more and more characterised his spirit, with the aptitude he evinced to soar beyond the formalities of a dead symbol into the higher regions of spiritual light and life, we can hardly picture to ourselves the full dimensions to which his whole mental being might have expanded. May there be many to catch the mantle of the ascending prophet—the mantle not only of his massive intellect, but of his broad, his earnest, and his catholic spirit!

NOTE B.

M. Peisse, an ingenious French author, in confuting the intellectual system of Dr Gall, puts the whole question of the *uniform* relation between the cerebral development and the power of the mental faculties to the test, by adducing the instance of a young Indian girl, who possessed a most monstrous configuration, but who never showed mentally the least peculiarity. After having attested and described the facts of the case, he proceeds to reason with the phrenologists as follows:—"I do not see how, on your principles, this difficulty can be surmounted. You would not be able to believe, on the one hand, that a sound intellect could dwell in a brain so monstrously deformed, without abandoning your fundamental principle, which expressly subordinates the mental manifestation to certain physiological conditions, determined by yourselves. You are not able, on the other hand, to allege that the malformations of the cranium have not had any influence upon the constitution of the brain, without taking away from your own system its one and only basis, its only guarantee, its only demonstration, namely, *cranioscopy*. If, in fact, you agree that in this case disease or original disposition have produced such considerable deviations upon the cranium, without the brain participating in it, then all your classifications, distinctions, and localisations, are destroyed; for they rest upon a prior supposition of the perfect and continuous correspondence of the cranium with the brain. What would then become of all your observations on the statues of the ancients—upon the heads of living men and animals—if this correspondence does not exist, at least, within the limits which you have

determined? * * * The fact which I now discuss is in direct contradiction with your principles, for it demonstrates the one or the other of these two propositions:—

1. “Either, that the integrity of the intellectual and moral faculties can subsist with a monstrous brain ; or,

2. “That the cranium can be monstrous without the brain participating in its deformation.

“And you cannot admit either the one or the other, without reducing to a nonentity all the organology of Dr Gall.”

NOTE C.

The philosophy of M. Azaïs may be in some measure comprehended from the following extract:—

“The universe is the whole sum of existences and of their relation : these existences and their relations change and unceasingly renew themselves : *action* is then necessary to the existence, and to the preservation of the universe.

“Matter, the substance of beings, is the passive subject of the universal action. God impresses the action—matter obeys.

“The universal action has received from the Creator one unique mode of exercise : on this condition only, it can be a source of order and at the same time production. *Expansion* is the only mode of universal action ; that is to say, that every material being by the simple fact, that it exists, is penetrated in all the points of its substance with an inward action, which tends incessantly to dilate it, to divide it, to augment indefinitely the space which it occupies, and, consequently, to dissolve it.

“Thus, a material being, of any kind whatever, if it could for a single moment be alone in space ; if, during one moment, it could form of itself a universe ; would only have need of this moment to enter into an eternal and absolute dissolution.

“But every material being, of whatever kind, and occupying whatever space, is surrounded with material beings, like to, or different from, itself ; which are all likewise penetrated with a continual expansive force ; which, consequently, repress or prevent its dissolution, by struggling against it ; and the expansion of every one of these bodies is itself repressed, retarded, and modified by the concurrent expansion of all the bodies with which it is surrounded ; so that *generally*, in the universe, the act of repression or of conservation is the immediate effect of universal expansion.”

The author next goes on to account, upon these mechanical principles, for the phenomena of heat, magnetism, electricity, and all the more subtle agents in nature. From thence he proceeds to deduce all the different attributes of material existence in its solid, liquid, and aëriform character. The phenomenon of *elasticity* is peculiarly important in his theory, as accounting for the vibrations by which sound, light, &c., are produced. Without dwelling upon these points, however, we must show his explanation of the principle of organised life.

“Organised beings are elastic beings, in the bosom of which vibrating globules are especially collected in particular focuses; having relations between them sustained by the aid of fibres or channels; this provision does not exist in *unorganised* elastic beings: their vibrating expansion proceeds indifferently from every point towards the surface.

“In plants, the organic relations are very simple, because the channels which establish them do not fold back upon themselves and have no connexion with one another: there is, in a word, no *circulation*. In animals, the organisation is so much the more elevated, as the circulation of the vibrating globules is more multiplied, and by this means the general correspondence more rapid and more intimate. Man is the most perfect of organised beings. Every organ, or focus of vibration, in an organised being, of whatever nature, executes its particular vibration: there is *health* or *harmony* in the whole of this being, when all the organs execute concordant vibrations among themselves, when they form a true *concert*. There is, on the contrary, disease when the vibrations of the different organs are discordant among themselves: in organised beings of the superior classes this discordance manifests itself by *fever*.”

Having explained the phenomena of organisation, our author proceeds to philosophise upon man, in his mental, moral, and social capacities. “Man,” he remarks, “experiences both a want and a repression alike; but of a much more multiplied character, because it is of a nature much more rich, much more lofty. Each one of us is desirous of prosperity, of well-being, of extension, of pleasure, of renown; each can only rest satisfied and peaceful, inasmuch as he moderates the expansion which animates him: if he abandons himself to his ardour, he soon meets with the resistance of his fellows—a resistance which proceeds from *their* expansion, and which, if it is repulsed with violence, rallies, becomes in its turn hostile, rude, oppressive. Human laws, of whatever kind—the laws of administra-

tion, the laws of justice, never do anything but regulate the reaction of the common expansion against the usurpations of individual expansion: every human law is a social form given to the single and universal law, to the law of compensations.

“In fine, every people is a federation of expansive beings; a federation which unceasingly tends to the improvement and to the increase of posterity, of territory, of celebrity, of all kinds of enjoyment. This expansion, as long as it is limited by wisdom, remains a principle of force and of harmony; but, favoured by imprudence and heated by ambition, it excites the reaction of surrounding peoples; it provokes their union and energy. People, ambitious without moderation, only call forth catastrophes. The earth has resounded with the violence of their movements; soon it is frightened at the noise of its fall: if it is not raised by a firm and conciliatory hand, it is crushed and annihilated.”

NOTE D.

Most of Fichte's works consist of somewhat small treatises; in which his thoughts, however, are developed at once with great brevity and great distinctness. The following, we believe, is a correct list of them, with the exception of short pieces or articles which appeared in the periodical literature of the day:—

1. “An Attempt at a Critique of all Revelation;” published anonymously in 1792, and, then, generally attributed to the pen of Kant.

2. “Lectures on the Destination of the Learned;” written on his first appointment at Jena—1794.

3. “On the Idea of a Doctrine of Science.” Weimar, 1794.

4. “Principles of a Universal Doctrine of Science.” Weimar, 1794.

5. “Sketch of the Peculiarity of the Doctrine of Science.” Jena, 1795.

6. “Principles of Natural Right.” Jena, 1796.

7. “A System of Moral Philosophy.” Jena, 1798.

These are the works in which Fichte's first views on the subjective philosophy were embodied. From this point, we find a somewhat modified spirit introduced into all his speculations, as we have indicated in the text.

8. “On the Destination of Man.” Berlin, 1800. Recently translated into English by Mrs Percy Sinnett.

9. “Sun-clear Intelligence, offered to the Public at large, on the peculiar Nature of the newest Philosophy.” Berlin, 1801.

10. “The Features of the present Age.” Berlin, 1804.

11. "On the Nature of the Scholar." Lectures delivered at Erlangen in 1805. Also translated.

12. "Directions for a Happy Life; or, the Doctrine of Religion." Berlin, 1806.

13. "Addresses to the German People." Berlin, 1808.

The following were published posthumously:—

14. "On the Facts of Consciousness." Stuttgart, 1817.

15. "Doctrine of Government." Berlin, 1820.

16. Three volumes of *Miscellanies*, edited by his son.

Several small controversial pamphlets are here omitted. The above list contains the works which show the development of his philosophical ideas.

The most distinctive feature, and far the most interesting, of Fichte's philosophy, is that which refers to man's moral action, and high destiny in life. However extravagant we may consider his theoretical science, yet it is impossible to read his noble sentiments on human duty, and to see them exemplified in his own eventful life, without feeling our moral weakness reprov'd, and our moral strength invigorated.

NOTE E.

To give anything approaching to a correct list of all Schelling's writings, is a matter of no small difficulty. His ever restless mind continued, for some years, to pour forth its productions, in treatises, pamphlets, and journals, in such a manner, that the only possible way of getting a connected view of his literary life, would be to arrange these articles in due order, as they appeared before the public. Instead of doing this, we shall give a classification of his writings, according to their general characteristics.

The first period in Schelling's philosophical life, is that in which he discussed the grounds of metaphysical science, as seen from Fichte's subjective principles. To this period belong his articles—

1. "On the Possibility of a Form of Philosophy generally." Tübingen, 1795; and,

2. "On *the Me*, as Principle of Philosophy; or on the Unconditioned in Human Knowledge."

3. "Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism," in "Niethammer's Phil. Journal," 1796.

The second period is that in which Schelling developed his *Natur-Philosophie* in its original form. The chief works belonging to this period are—

1. "Ideas towards a Philosophy of Nature." Leipsic, 1797.

2. "On the Soul of the World ; an Hypothesis of the Higher Physics." Hamburg, 1798.
3. "Sketch of a System of Natural Philosophy." Jena, 1799.
4. "System of Transcendental Idealism." Tübingen, 1800.
5. "The Journal for Speculative Physics." Jena, 1800—1803.
6. "Bruno ; a Dialogue on the Divine and Natural Principle of Things." Berlin, 1802.
7. "Lectures on the Method of Academical Study." Tübingen, 1803.

In the third period of his philosophical life, Schelling began to feel that he had confined himself too much to the objective point of view, and lost sight of the powers and freedom of the individual *self*. We find, therefore, in the following works, a tendency backward to the subjective principle. These are—

1. "Philosophy and Religion." Tübingen, 1804.
2. "Representation of the true Relation of Natural Philosophy to the improved Doctrine of Fichte." Tübingen, 1806.
3. "Yearly Journal of Medicine." Tübingen, 1806.
4. "Memorial of the Work of Jacobi on Divine Things." Tübingen, 1812.

The last period of Schelling's life, is that in which he has come round to the Theosophic point of view, and merged his former ideas into a comprehensive system of religious mysticism. To this belong—

1. "Researches into the Essence of Human Freedom." Tübingen, 1812.
2. "The Philosophy of Mythology ;" in a work on "The Deities of Samothrace." Tübingen, 1815.
3. "Preface to Cousin's Philosophical Fragments." The only thing which the Author wrote, after his work on Mythology, for twenty years.
4. His Lectures at Berlin, in the year 1842, on the "Philosophy of Revelation," of which a few only have been printed.

NOTE F.

The writings of Hegel are comprised in a much smaller number of independent works, than those of Fichte and Schelling. We have to thank the zeal of his followers in Berlin, for giving us a complete

edition of them, edited in a most masterly style. His publications appeared in the following order :—

1. A Dissertation “De Orbitis Planetarum.” Jena, 1801.
2. A small work, “On the Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy.” Jena, 1801.
3. Many Articles in the “Critical Journal of Philosophy.” 1802, 1803.

Up to this period, Hegel was not distinguished from the ordinary school of Schelling, but worked in conjunction with him.

4. The first work, in which he decidedly took up his own independent position, was that entitled “Phenomenology of Mind.” Würzburg, 1807. (This work Hegel used to call his “Voyage of Discovery.”)

5. “Science of Logic.” This is comprised in three volumes, which appeared successively, from 1812 to 1816, at Nuremberg.

6. “Encyclopædia of Philosophical Sciences.” Heidelberg, 1817.

7. “Principles of the Rights of Nature.” Berlin, 1821.

In addition to these, Hegel delivered many courses of Lectures at Berlin, on almost every subject connected with philosophy and its history, many of which have been published posthumously, from a collation of his own Notes with those taken by his pupils, at their delivery. The most interesting of these are, the “History of Philosophy,” and the “Philosophy of History.”

NOTE G.

The following is the statement which has been given by the authors of the “Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques,” of the principles by which their criticisms have been guided.

1. Retaining as we do, to the bottom of our hearts, an inviolable respect for that tutelary power, which accompanies man from the cradle to the grave, speaking to him always of God, and pointing him to heaven as his true country ; we believe, nevertheless, that philosophy and religion are two things altogether distinct, the one of which cannot supply the place of the other, but which are both necessary to the satisfaction of the mind, and the dignity of our race. We believe that philosophy is a science altogether *free* ; which is sufficient in itself, and appeals only to reason. But we maintain that, at the same

time, far from being an individual and sterile faculty, varying from one man and from one period to another, reason comes from God; that it is, like Him, invariable, and absolute in its essence; that it is nothing less than a reflex of the Divine wisdom, enlightening the consciousness of every individual man, enlightening the tribes of humanity as a whole, under the condition of labour and of time.

2. We recognise no science without method. But the method which we have adopted, and which we regard as the only legitimate one, is that which has already twice regenerated philosophy, and through philosophy the whole sum of human knowledge. It is the method of Socrates and Descartes, but applied with more rigour, and developed to the present proportions of science, the horizon of which has widened with the ages. Equally removed from empiricism, which will admit nothing beyond the grossest and most palpable facts, and from pure speculation, which feeds upon chimæras, the psychological method observes religiously, by the aid of that interior light which is called consciousness, all the facts and all the states of the human mind. It collects one by one all the principles, all the ideas, which constitute, in any manner, the foundation of our intelligence; then, by the aid of induction and reasoning, it fructifies them, and raises them to the highest unity, and develops them into abundant results.

3. Thanks to this manner of proceeding, and thanks to it alone, we teach in psychology the most positive spiritualism, allying the system of Leibnitz to that of Plato and Descartes; not admitting that the mind is an idea, a pure thought, nor a power without liberty, destined simply to put into play the machinery of the body; nor any fugitive form of being in general, which, once broken, only leaves after it an existence unknown to itself, an immortality without consciousness, and without memory. It is in our eyes, that which it is in reality—a free and responsible power, an existence entirely distinct from every other, which possesses itself, knows itself, governs itself, and carries in itself, with the impress of its origin, the pledge of its immortality.

4. In morals we recognise no transaction between passion and duty; between eternal justice and necessity, that is to say, the interest of the moment. The idea of duty, of good in itself, is for us the sovereign law, which allows no attainment, and rejects all condition; which binds states and governments, as well as individuals, and ought to serve for a rule in the appreciation of the past, as in the resolutions of the future. But we believe, at the same time, that under the empire of this Divine law, of which charity and the love of God are

the indispensable complement, all the wants of our nature find their legitimate satisfaction ; all the faculties of our being are excited to develop themselves in the most perfect agreement ; all the forces of the individual and of society, being combined under one and the same discipline, are equally put out to profit, we will not say for the attainment of absolute happiness, which belongs not to this world, but for the glory and dignity of the human race.

5. In all questions relative to God, and the relations of God to man, we have given its due part to *feeling* ; we have recognised, more perhaps than any of our predecessors, its legitimate and salutary influence, even while maintaining, in their whole extent, the rights and the authority of reason. We accord to reason the power of demonstrating to us the existence of the Creator, of instructing us in his infinite attributes, and his relation to the universe of Beings ; but by feeling we enter, in some way, into more intimate communion with him, and his action upon us is at once more immediate and more present. We profess an equal separation from mysticism, which, sacrificing reason to feeling, and man to God, loses itself in the splendours of the infinite ; and from pantheism, which refuses to God the very perfections of man, by admitting under this name some mere abstract being deprived of consciousness and of liberty. Thanks to this consciousness of ourselves, and of this free-will, upon which are founded at once our method and our entire philosophy, this abstract and vague Deity, of whom we have just spoken, the God of pantheism, becomes for ever impossible, and we see in its place *Providence*, the free and holy God whom the human race adores, the legislator of the moral world, the source at the same time, as it is, the object of that inexhaustible love of the beautiful and the good, which at the centre of our souls mix themselves with the passions of another order.

6. In fine, we think that the history of philosophy is inseparable from philosophy itself ; that they both form one and the same science. All the problems agitated by the philosophers, all the solutions which have been given of them, all the systems which in turn have reigned, or have struggled for the mastery in the same epoch, are, in a certain manner of viewing them, facts that have their origin in the human consciousness, facts that illustrate and complete those which every one of us discovers in himself : for how could they have produced themselves, if they had not had in us (in the laws of our intelligence) their foundation and their origin ? Independently of this point of view, which regards the history of philosophy as a counterproof, and neces-

sary complement of psychology, we admit that truth belongs to all times and to all places, that it constitutes in some sort the very essence of the human mind, but that it does not always manifest itself under the same form, and to the same degree. We believe, in fine, in a wise progress, compatible with the invariable principles of reason, and from that cause the present state of science attaches itself closely with the past; the order in which the systems of philosophy follow and unite with each other, becomes the very order which presides over the development of the human intelligence athwart the ages, and throughout the entireness of humanity.

NOTE H.

In the course of our "Historical View," we have said nothing respecting the philosophy of any of the European nations beyond England, France, and Germany. It should not be inferred, however, from hence, that philosophy has been entirely neglected amongst all the other peoples of Europe except those three. The reason why they hold no prominent place in the history of philosophy is—that they have attached themselves to some of the systems we have explained, rather than originated in any new methods or theories.

Next to the countries above mentioned, Italy has been the most active in the pursuit of philosophy. The merits of Vico, as father of the philosophy of history, have been already mentioned. Beside Vico, however, the last century gave to Italy several writers, more peculiarly philosophical, who are worthy to stand side by side with those of the other countries of Europe. Of these Antonio Genovesi has been termed the restorer of philosophy to Italy. Appiano Buonafede, born four years later (1716,) was an equally fertile, though very opposite writer. The former may be regarded as belonging to the eclectic, certainly to the spiritualist school, while his opponent was a child of the sensationalism of the eighteenth century. In morals the name of Muratori has almost an European reputation.

In the present century we have Romagnosi as the historian of philosophy, Galluppi as the psychologist, and Gioberti as the metaphysician; so that every branch of philosophical science has had its representative in Italy. In the person of the latter of these especially, the spirit of philosophy has begun to menace the power both of superstition and of authority, under which that unhappy country has for so long been oppressed.

In Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, several authors have been incited to metaphysical investigations by the German philosophy ; and even Portugal has produced one or two works worthy of notice. As all these, however, have a reference to some of the systems already explained, I have not thought it worth while to get up any distinct account of them in the present volumes.

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